

8. FULL APPLICATION - ERECTION OF A GENERAL PURPOSE AGRICULTURAL BUILDING - LAND TO THE SOUTH OF NEW CLOSE FARM, OVER HADDON (NP/DDD/0318/0215 420733 / 366411 P407, P4712, & P6013 MN 14/3/2018)

APPLICANT: WHEELDON PARTNERS

1. Site and Surroundings

- 1.1. The site is a field on the eastern edge of Over Haddon village, approximately 70m west of the nearest point of School Lane, which represents the eastern edge of the built settlement.
- 1.2. The field occupies a position on a south facing hillside, which slopes down to Lathkill Dale with the River Lathkill approximately 400m to the south.
- 1.3. A number of footpaths run closely past the site to the north, east and west.
- 1.4. There is already an agricultural building on the site, measuring approximately 18.3 metres long by 12.5 metres wide. This is of modern construction having been granted permission in 1995, and is constructed with a lower wall of natural stone to the south and east elevation with blockwork to the north and western sides, and with timber boarding above along the sides with metal sheeting above on the gables.
- 1.5. There is a large bund of earth to the immediate west of the building, which was included to improve screening of the existing building as part of the permission that approved the building.
- 1.6. There is a single tree on the embankment, although much more significant planting was secured by the planning permission. It is unclear whether this was planted or not, but if so it has failed to establish. There is a further single line of trees bounding the eastern edge of the field, which was also part of the landscaping scheme that accompanied the previous permission.
- 1.7. A water tank has been erected adjacent to the existing building. It is unclear how long this has been present on site but there is no record of it having been granted planning permission.
- 1.8. The site is accessed from either a minor unnamed road approximately 150m to the north or along a track leading from the village to the west. In terms of the northern access a gateway off the road runs south through a field, through a further gateway, and in to the application site. The western site access passes through the fields to the west before joining the road network on the eastern edge of the village.
- 1.9. New Close Farm, which includes a group of dwellings and farm buildings, is located approximately 100m north of the application site, and is in separate ownership to the farm business that is operated at the application site.
- 1.10. To the west the nearest neighbouring property is Hall Hill Cottage, located on School Lane and approximately 95 metres from the proposed building.
- 1.11. The site is outside of the Over Haddon Conservation Area.

2. Proposal

- 2.1. To erect a general purpose agricultural building adjacent to the existing building. The building would have a footprint of 418m², be approximately 30.4m long, 13.7m wide and approximately 5.5m tall.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That the application be REFUSED for the following reasons:

- 1. Due to the isolated hillside position of the proposed building in an open landscape the development would result in significant harm to the rural and largely undeveloped character and appearance of the landscape at this location. As a result the development fails to comply with planning policies L1, LC4, LC13, and the provisions of the NPPF in so far as they relate to landscape protection within the National Park.**

4. Key Issues

- The need for a further agricultural building
- The impact of the development on the character and appearance of the landscape

5. Relevant Planning History

1994 – Planning permission refused for agricultural building approximately 150m west of the currently proposed building

1995 – Planning permission granted for erection of agricultural building adjacent to position of currently proposed building

6. Consultations

- 6.1. Derbyshire County Council – Highways – No objections subject to all use remaining ancillary to the land to the south of New Close
- 6.2. Derbyshire Dales District Council – No response at time of writing
- 6.3. Over Haddon Parish Council – Support the application subject to two conditions:
 - The site is very prominent site in the landscape so landscaping on the eastern side is recommended;
 - Vehicle access should be only via the new track from New Close Lane. This is shorter and more direct than the original access track (which goes behind the village hall) and in view of extra traffic which would be expected would avoid congestion within the village.

7. Representations

- 7.1. One letter of representation has been received, objecting to the proposal. The grounds for objection raised are that it is considered the proposal would have adverse landscape impacts due to the isolated and prominent position of the building and the proximity of a number of public footpaths from which it would be visible.

8. Policies

8.1. National Park designation is the highest level of landscape designation in the UK. The Environment Act 1995 sets out two statutory purposes for national parks in England and Wales:

- Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage
- 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 the duty to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the national parks.

National Planning Policy Framework

8.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27 March 2012 and replaced a significant proportion of central government planning policy with immediate effect. The Government's intention is that the document should be considered as a material consideration and carry particular weight where a development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date. In the National Park the development plan comprises the Authority's Core Strategy 2011 and saved policies in the Peak District National Park Local Plan 2001. Policies in the Development Plan provide a clear starting point consistent with the National Park's statutory purposes for the determination of this application. It is considered that in this case there is no significant conflict between prevailing policies in the Development Plan and more recent Government guidance in the NPPF.

8.3. Para 115 of the NPPF states that *'great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in all these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads.'*

8.4. Part 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework deals with conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

8.5. Amongst other things, paragraph 132 states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. It notes that the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. It also advises that significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting and that as heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification.

8.6. Paragraph 134 states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

Development Plan policies

8.7. Policy GSP1 sets out the broad strategy for achieving the National Park's objectives having regard to the Sandford Principle, (that is, where there are conflicting desired outcomes in achieving national park purposes, greater priority must be given to the conservation of the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area, even at the cost of socio-economic benefits). GSP1 also sets out the need for sustainable development and to avoid major development unless it is essential, and the need to mitigate localised harm where essential major development is allowed. Policy GSP3 sets out development management principles and states that all development must respect, conserve and enhance all valued characteristics of the site and buildings, paying particular attention to, amongst other elements, impact on the character and setting of buildings, scale of the development

appropriate to the character and appearance of the National Park, design in accordance with the National Park Authority Design Guide and impact on living conditions of communities.

- 8.8. Policy L1 identifies that development must conserve and enhance valued landscape character and valued characteristics, and other than in exceptional circumstances, proposals in the Natural Zone will not be permitted.
- 8.9. Policy L3 requires that development must conserve and where appropriate enhance heritage assets.
- 8.10. Local Plan policy LC4 states that where development is acceptable in principle it will be permitted provided it is of a high standard of design that respects and conserves the landscape, built environment and characteristics of the area.
- 8.11. 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.

Wider policy context

- 8.12. The Authority has produced a Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) document 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 sets out 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 explains that it is best to keep new agricultural buildings close to the existing ones, and make the best use of trees, walls and other landscape features. Paragraph 3.6.3 explains that the use of dark tones will help to reduce a buildings impact.

Relevant Core Strategy (CS) policies: GSP1, GSP3, L1, L3

Relevant Local Plan (LP) policies: LC4, LC13

9. Assessment

Principle

- 9.1. Planning policy supports the erection of new farm buildings providing that they are required for farming purposes and would have acceptable landscape impacts. Landscape impacts are considered later in this report.
- 9.2. In terms of the agricultural need for the building, the applicant farms approximately 113 hectares, and the holding's stock currently comprises 550 breeding ewes and a suckler herd of 140 cattle. Of the 113 hectares approximately 32 hectares are located surrounding the application site at Over Haddon.
- 9.3. The 32 hectares of land at Over Haddon includes recently acquired land that has facilitated the applicant grazing increased numbers of sheep and livestock at the site.
- 9.4. The existing building adjacent to the site of the proposed building is the only one serving the 32 hectares. At the time it was granted planning permission (1995) the land in ownership at the site was only 12 hectares and the building (with a footprint of 228m²) was sufficient for the management of the land. Given that the land farmed at the site has since doubled, the

applicant advises it is no longer large enough to serve the increased stocking numbers, which requires more space for the storage of fodder and housing of animals.

- 9.5. On this basis it is accepted that there a reasonable agricultural need for the new building, and the development is acceptable in principle, subject to it not having an unacceptable landscape impact.

Design

- 9.6. The building follows a typical design for modern agricultural buildings. It has a low pitched roof and timber and metal sheeting above a lower stone wall. This accords with the Authority's adopted guidance for the design of farm buildings and is acceptable.

Landscape impact

- 9.7. As noted previously, the site is an elevated hillside position that is prominent and clearly visible in many close public views; it can be seen looking out of the conservation area from School Road to the west, and a network of footpaths pass the site to the north, east, and south – some at a distance of only a few metres. The site is also seen in more distant views, including at distances of over 700m from Youlgrave Road to the east and south east.
- 9.8. The existing building on the site provides a useful marker for understanding the impact the proposed building would have. This building is clearly visible in the landscape from all of the vantage points detailed above.
- 9.9. The impacts of the existing development in these views would be magnified by the proposed building. In views from the east the building would be much longer, increasing its prominence, and in views from the south the additional of a further gable would make the building significantly more imposing and prominent, especially in views from nearby footpaths.
- 9.10. The result of this increased massing and prominence would be a significant further visual intrusion in the open countryside, harming it's largely undeveloped and open rural character at this location.
- 9.11. There are larger groups of buildings to the north around New Close farm and to the west at Over Haddon village that would be seen in some of the same views as the building, but the application site would appear isolated from these.
- 9.12. The existing landscaping around it would do little to reduce its impact either, providing only very limited screening, and the building would still appear out of keeping with the otherwise undeveloped land around it. Landscaping would do little to ameliorate wider landscape impacts arising from the development.
- 9.13. Furthermore, it would not be appropriate in landscape terms to undertake significant tree planting in this location in an effort to mitigate the building's impact; whilst some thicker planting belts are found at less elevated positions in the locality, the higher hillsides in closer proximity to the application site have only scattered planting. A much denser belt of trees would be required to have any meaningful effect on the screening of the building and this would be at odds with the landscape character in this location.
- 9.14. As a result of the impacts identified above, the development fails to comply with policies L1, LC4, LC13, and paragraph 115 of the NPPF, all of which require development to conserve the character and appearance of the landscape for which the National Park is primarily designated. The unacceptable landscape impact of the building could not be offset with landscaping in this location.

Amenity

- 9.15. The building is almost 100 metres from the nearest residential properties of Hall Hill Cottage on School Lane, and a short distance further from the dwellings around New Close Farm to the north.
- 9.16. At these distances it is not considered that a building of the proposed size for the proposed uses would result in any significant additional amenity impacts arising from noise or odour, particularly given that the site is already in agricultural use.
- 9.17. Due to the isolated position of the building there are no further amenity impacts arising as a result of the development either.

Highway Considerations

- 9.18. The site access would remain unaltered. Whilst some additional vehicle movements could be expected as a result of the increased land in ownership at the site, the provision of a further building would not be a significant contributing factor to this; if anything, the facility to store further feed, bedding, and vehicles on the site may reduce the need for vehicular trips to the site.
- 9.19. The Highway Authority also raise no objection to the proposal.
- 9.20. On the basis of the above the development would not result in any significant adverse highway impacts.

Archaeology

- 9.21. The site is within an area associated with an Historic Environment Record. This records the land around Over Haddon as containing the remnants of a medieval field system including ridge and furrow, lynchets and sub-rectangular enclosures.
- 9.22. The proposed position of the building would not have any significant effect on these features however. The ground adjacent to the existing building has already been disturbed and partially levelled during its construction, and the new building would not disturb a significant amount of further land, nor effect any existing field boundary.
- 9.23. Further, there is already a modern building in the field in a similar position as well as those 100m to the north and as a result the building would not harm the interpretation of the historic field system to any significant degree;
- 9.24. On this basis it is considered that further archaeological evaluation and/or mitigation is not necessary in this instance.

Pollution

- 9.25. The building would be used for the wintering of cattle, which would produce waste. Livestock would typically be bedded on straw, which would significantly reduce any flow of waste from the building on to or in to surrounding land. Given this, the fact that the building would not be used for housing livestock all year round, and because of the size of the building which would have limited livestock housing capacity, additional measures to prevent groundwater pollution are not necessary.

10. Conclusion

- 10.1. The proposed development would have a an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the landscape which cannot be overcome by landscaping or planting. As a result the development fails to comply with planning policies L1, LC4, LC13, and the provisions of the NPPF in so far as they relate to landscape protection within the National

Park.

10.2. Accordingly, the application is recommended for refusal.

11. Human Rights

11.1. None

12. List of Background Papers (not previously published)

None

Report Author and Job Title

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