

14. FULL APPLICATION – ERECTION OF TWO AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS AT BROWNHILLS FARM, LONGNOR ROAD, WARSLOW – (NP/SM/1118/1005, P5084 LB)

APPLICANT: PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Site and Surroundings

1. Brownhills Farm is situated approximately 1km north of Warslow, to the West of the B5053. It forms part of the Warslow Moors Estate which is owned by the Authority. Comprising of a farmhouse, a range of traditional and modern farm buildings, the tenant runs a dairy and sheep farm which extends to 200 acres over grassland.
2. Access is gained via a surfaced track that joins the B5053 directly opposite the entrance to Warslow Hall on the other side of the highway. A public right of way crosses the site.

Proposal

3. This application proposes two new agricultural buildings, one to replace an existing cattle building and the other to provide a lambing shed.
4. The replacement cattle building will be of identical dimensions and form as the existing building; 8.8 metres long x 5.9 metres wide, 3.4 metres to the eaves and 4 metres to the ridge under a mono pitched roof, located on the same footprint as the existing structure within the centre of the yard. It will be constructed from a steel portal frame, concrete panels and Yorkshire boarding under blue fibre cement roof sheeting.
5. The proposed lambing shed will be located to the western side of the site adjoining an existing agricultural building and will replace two small timber structures. Measuring 13.7 metres long x 6.1 metres wide, 3 metres to the eaves and 3.6 metres to the pitch, the building will be of a portal framed construction clad with panels and boarding under a cement fibre slate blue roof.

RECOMMENDATION

That the application is APPROVED subject to the following conditions:

- **3 year time limit**
- **In accordance with submitted plans**
- **Roof slate blue**
- **Removal of building when no longer required for agriculture.**

Key Issues

6. The impact of the agricultural buildings within its setting and wider landscape.

History

- NP/SM/0106/0045: Proposed alterations to the existing farm entrance and new replacement cattle grid, conditionally approved.
- NP/SM/1005/0988: Extension of existing steel framed cattle building, conditionally approved.
- SM/1202/091: Erection of agricultural building, conditionally approved.
- 97012GDPO: Extension to yard area, accepted.
- 95025GDPO: Extension to shippon, accepted.
- 93052GDPO: Concrete pad areas to assist with cleaning out and feeding silage building.

Consultations

7. Warslow and Elkstone Parish Council: No response.
8. Staffordshire Moorlands District Council: No response.

Representations

9. The Authority has not received any letters of representations.

Policies

10. 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
11. 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

12. 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. It was revised and republished in July 2018. 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.
13. Paragraph 172 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.'*

Development Plan policies

14. 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.
15. 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.

16. 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.
17. Policy LC4 of the Local Plan states that where development is acceptable in principle it will be permitted provided that its detailed treatment is of a high standard that respects, conserves and where possible enhances the landscape, built environment and other valued characteristics of the area.
18. Policy LC13 of the Local Plan is supportive of new agricultural buildings provided that they are close to the main group of buildings, respect the design, scale mass and colouring of existing buildings and building traditions of the area, avoid harm to valued characteristics and do not require obtrusive access tracks, roads or services.

Relevant Core Strategy (CS)
policies:

a. GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, L1

Relevant Local Plan (LP) policies:

b. LC4, LC5, LC13

Assessment

Replacement cattle building

19. The existing cattle building, which houses the holding's young stock, is located within the heart of the farmyard. The building has a mono-pitched timber framed structure clad in corrugated tin sheets but due to age, materials and impact from the weather the structure is clearly dilapidated and in a very poor state of repair. As all other buildings on site are full to capacity the young stock cannot be relocated elsewhere on the holding. Therefore, it is considered that there is a reasonable agricultural justification to replace the existing building.
20. The replacement building will be located on the same footprint as the existing and be of the same size, scale and design, raising no objections in terms of siting as it will remain adjacent to existing building within the heart of the farmyard, with no visual impact in the immediate context or wider views and setting. Furthermore, the building will remain proportionate to the needs of the holding and the existing young stock numbers which it will house.
21. Given the context of the other existing buildings on site, the external appearance does not give rise to any overriding objections. The proposed colours and materials of the building will provide an enhancement to the structure and to the stone barn in which it adjoins.
22. There is no requirement for an additional access track, hardstanding or landscaping due to the building's central yard location and existing context of the site. In addition the proposal does not raise any highway objections or raise any amenity issues as there are no nearby neighbouring properties.

Proposed lambing shed

23. The application also proposes a new lean-to lambing shed which is required to house and provide cover for the farm's flock of sheep during lambing time and to allow space for routine management and treatment and for shelter during the inclement weather and spring months. Again, as all existing buildings are full to capacity and are used for cattle, there are no alternatives for housing the flock. Therefore, in this case it is considered that there is sufficient agricultural justification for this element of the proposed development.
24. The design of the lean-to is functional, suited to its purpose and proportionate to the needs of the agricultural unit. Given the context of the existing modern farm buildings on the holding the external appearance of timber cladding, pre-stressed concrete panels under a slate blue reinforced fibre cement roof raises no objections.

25. Due to the arrangement of the existing buildings, the application proposes that the building projects off the west elevation of the existing building that is furthest west of the group. The proposed building will project into the adjacent field, but it is still considered to be within the logical limits of the farm arrangement as it will replace two existing smaller timber sheds, providing enhancement, and the immediate area is used for vehicular movement and access over a field track that is used for access.
26. Furthermore, as the building is a mono pitched design, projecting off the eaves of the existing building, the overall massing of the building is off a small scale in comparison to the building it abuts and is therefore considered to be of a suitable scale projecting away from the main group of buildings. In addition the position of the surrounding mature trees will allow the building to sit comfortably within the landscape.
27. A footpath runs in close proximity to the north west of the boundary of the farmyard but the views of the proposed lean-to would not be obtrusive in its immediate or wider landscape setting as when viewed it would be against the backdrop of the existing farm buildings and is therefore considered to be situated in the least damaging location on the complex and is very unlikely to detract from the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
28. As there are no nearby dwellings the proposal will not give rise to any amenity issues. Given the proposed location of the building and due to the mature around the site and their position in the landscape no additional tree planting is required in this case.
29. For both proposed buildings, there is no requirement for additional access tracks or hardstandings. The buildings are sited for their purpose and no further landscaping is required due to the existing topography of the land, location of the buildings and existing context of the site. The proposal does not raise any highways considerations.
30. The existing buildings that are to be removed are small timber sheds and an open lean-to building. These buildings are unlikely to be suitable to provide any habitats for bats or other protected species and it is considered that there would be no harm to ecology interests arising from their removal.

Conclusion

31. Consequently, it is considered that the proposed replacement building for young stock and new lambing shed are of appropriate designs and scale, would not harm the amenity of the surrounding area and located in the least damaging locations reasonable on the holding for their requirement. The detailed treatment for both buildings are considered acceptable. Therefore, the application is considered to accord with the relevant policies in the Development Plan and accordingly the current application is recommended for conditional approval.

Human Rights

32. None arising.

List of Background Papers (not previously published)

33. None

Report Author and Job Title

34. Laura Buckley, Planning Assistant