

**8. FULL APPLICATION – CHANGE OF USE OF BARN TO RESIDENTIAL, ASSOCIATED EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS, INSTALLATION OF PACKAGE TREATMENT PLANT, WORKS OF HARD AND SOFT LANDSCAPING AND OTHER INCIDENTAL WORKS AT BARN AT HIGHFIELDS FARM, MIDDLETON LANE, STONEY MIDDLETON (NP/DDD/0219/0127, AM)**

**APPLICANT: MR J ARMSTRONG**

**Summary**

1. The application proposes the conversion of a barn to a market dwelling. The barn has planning permission for conversion to a holiday let. We consider that the barn is a non-designated heritage asset and that the proposed development would conserve the significance of the barn, its setting and the landscape of the National Park. The application is recommended for approval.

**Site and surroundings**

2. The site is in open countryside approximately 850m west of Stoney Middleton, on the south side of Middleton Lane.
3. There is a field barn on the site which is set back behind the highway verge and is constructed from rubble limestone under pitched roofs clad with natural blue slate. The barn is partially two storey and single storey; the single storey element appears to be in a poor state of repair. The barn is within a relatively small field which is enclosed by stone walling and post and wire fencing.
4. Access to the site is off Middleton Lane. The nearest neighbouring property is Highfields Farm to the west of the site and a range of modern agricultural buildings to the east.

**Proposal**

5. Conversion of the barn to a single bedroom market dwelling.
6. The two storey barn would be converted within the existing shell of the building. The single storey element of the building would be demolished and re-built. New timber windows and doors would be installed along with a total of four roof-lights on the south facing elevation of the building.
7. An area of gravel hardstanding would be created to the rear of the barn for access and parking. This would be bounded by a new post and wire fence to define the domestic curtilage. A package treatment plant is proposed within the curtilage.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**That the application be APPROVED subject to the following conditions:**

1. **Statutory 3 year time limit for implementation.**
2. **Development to be carried out in accordance with specified approved plans.**
3. **No development shall commence until a detailed scheme of mitigation and enhancement measures for bats and birds has been submitted to and approved in writing by the National Park Authority. The development shall then not be**

carried out other than in complete accordance with the approved scheme which shall be completed prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved.

4. No works to the building shall take place in the bird breeding or maternity roosting seasons (March to September, inclusive).
5. There shall be no external lighting to the building and the associated curtilage shall not be provided with any other external source of illumination at any time other than in complete accordance with a detailed scheme which shall have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the National Park Authority.
6. Prior to the surfacing of the drive, parking or manoeuvring areas a specification or sample of the material to be used for the surfacing of these areas shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the National Park Authority. The development shall thereafter not be carried out other than in complete accordance with the approved details.
7. The development hereby approved shall not be occupied until the parking and manoeuvring space shown on the approved plans has been fully laid out and constructed.
8. There shall be no gates or other barriers within 6 metres of the nearside highway boundary and any gates shall open inwards only.
9. The domestic curtilage of the dwelling hereby approved shall be restricted to the respective adjacent area within the proposed post and wire fence shown on approved plan: drawing 'P2' Revision A. No planning permission is granted for the change of any other land within the application site to domestic use.
10. All new service lines associated with the approved development, and on land with the applicant's ownership and control, shall be placed underground and the ground restored to its original condition thereafter.
11. The conversion shall be carried out within the shell of the existing building, with any rebuilding limited to that specifically shown on the approved plans.
12. All new stonework shall be in natural, reclaimed limestone faced, laid and pointed to match the existing stonework.
13. Prior to the installation of any new window or door frames a detailed scheme for the proposed external finish of the window and door frames shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the National Park Authority. The window and door frames shall thereafter be finished in accordance with the approved scheme prior to the first occupation of the dwelling and the finish shall be maintained throughout the lifetime of the development hereby approved.
14. The new doors shall be vertically boarded timber with no external framing or glazing.
15. The rainwater goods shall be black. The gutters shall be fixed directly to the stonework with brackets and without the use of fascia boards. There shall be no projecting or exposed rafters.

16. **All pipework, other than rainwater goods, shall be completely internal within the building.**
17. **Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that order with or without modification) no improvement or other alteration to the external appearance of the dwelling shall be carried out and no extensions, porches, ancillary buildings, satellite antenna, solar or photovoltaic panels, gates, fences, walls or other means of boundary enclosure shall be erected on the site without an application for planning permission having first been made to and approved in writing by the National Park Authority.**

### **Key Issues**

- Is the conversion of the barn to a market dwelling acceptable in principle.
- The impact of the conversion upon the barn and its setting within the landscape and the impact upon other valued characteristics of the National Park.

### **History**

2009: Planning permission granted conditionally for conversion of barn to a holiday let.

2012: Planning permission renewed for conversion of barn to a holiday let.

2016: Application for conversion of barn to holiday let withdrawn prior to determination.

2017: Planning permission granted conditionally for conversion of barn to holiday let.

2018: Pre-application advice sought by the applicant for conversion of the barn to a market dwelling.

8. We advised that the conversion of the barn to a market dwelling is likely to be acceptable because it would not result in any significant additional impact compared to the approved holiday let scheme. We advised that a further extension to the building would have an adverse impact on the character of the property and the surrounding area and that we would be unlikely to support this.

### **Consultations**

9. Highway Authority – No response to date.
10. Officer Note: the Highway Authority raised no objection to the previous application for conversion to a holiday let subject to conditions requiring parking and manoeuvring space to be implemented and maintained and to prevent any gates or barriers within 6 metres of the highway boundary.
11. District Council – No response to date.
12. Parish Council – Object to the development on the basis that it is contrary to the Authority's policies. The Parish Council consider that conditions set with regard to the suitability of the barn for short-let holiday residential use and not full-residential use are still applicable.
13. Natural England – No response to date.

14. Officer Note: Natural England raised no objection to the previous application for conversion to a holiday let and considered that the development would not have significant adverse impact on designated sites.
15. PDNPA Archaeology – Object to the development on the basis of insufficient information and make the following comment.
16. Officer Note: A heritage statement has been submitted in response to the comments from the Authority's Senior Archaeologist (below) who has been re-consulted. Any further comments will be reported verbally at the meeting.
17. *"The barn at Highfields Farm is a non-designated heritage asset of historic and archaeological interest. barn is recorded in the County Historic Environment Record and the Peak District National Park Historic Building Sites and Monuments Record (MPD13325), as a former outfarm. Outfarms are multi-purposes farm buildings, singular or in small groups, set around a yard located away from the main farmstead. They enabled land and stock to be managed remotely from the main farm, and are often associated with parliamentary land enclosure of the landscape.*
18. *It was likely used for sheltering livestock (cattle or sheep), for storage hay, fodder and other crops, or a combination of these activities. The building has historic and archaeological interest, due to its traditional agricultural character that demonstrates its agricultural origin and function, the traditional materials from which it is constructed, surviving historic features and fabric and the form and location of the openings, which provides legibility of the historic function of the barn. Such small barns are characteristic of the agricultural development in these areas in the 19th century and are illustrative of agricultural management practices and their changes overtime.*
19. *The Peak District National Park Historic Farmstead Character Statement identifies that field barns and outfarms are an important part of the Peak District's landscape, they are highly characteristic and strongly contribute to local distinctiveness, especially when combined with the distinctive pattern of dry stone wall enclosure reflecting the development of the historic landscape as at Highfields Barn. The Peak District National Park Historic Farmstead Character Statement also identifies that farm buildings that are detached and remote from a main farmsteads (both outfarms and field barns) have been subject to high levels of change both with the Peak District and nationally, with a 57% loss of such features from the Peak District landscape. This makes those that survive all the more precious.*
20. *The conversion of the farm buildings to residential use will likely result in harm to their significance through the loss of historic fabric and features, and impact on the agricultural character of the building, loss of legibility of historic agricultural functions etc. However, the current application contains insufficient information for us to be able to make an appropriate assessment of the scale of the harm impact of the proposed conversions on the significance of the outfarm complex and its historic landscape location and setting. The application is not accompanied by an appropriate description of the significance of the heritage asset, and therefore does not meet the requirements of NPPF para.189.*
21. *I also have concerns about, and there would be a need to appropriately control, the introduction of domestic curtilage, and all the usual things this entails (services, light pollution, waste disposal, garden areas, parking areas, bin stores, waste disposal, proposed post and wire fence etc.), elements that are out of place in the setting of a traditional agricultural building and within its landscape setting.*
22. *An appropriate assessment of the significance of the heritage asset is required. This*

needs to:

- *Consider the historic development, character and significance of the outfarm, its buildings and the contribution of the setting to significance (including identifying significant historic fabric and features, identify any evidence of phasing etc.)*
- *Consider the significance of the historic landscape and fossilised medieval field system.”*

23. PDNPA Ecology: No response to date.

24. Officer Note: The Authority’s Ecologist raised no objection to the previous application for conversion to a holiday let subject to planning conditions to ensure that mitigation for bats and birds as recommended in the protected species survey were implemented and that building works took place outside of the main breeding bird season.

### **Representations**

25. One letter has been received during the consultation period. The letter objects to the proposed development for the following reasons:

- Previously the Authority has considered that the barn is unsuitable for full residential use.
- The barn is in close proximity to a working farm and from agricultural sheds that house cattle and store muck. Occupants of a permanent dwelling would be more likely to be adversely affected by noise and smell from a working farm than holiday makers.
- The building should not have chimneys due to potential fire risk and risk of smoke entering cattle buildings.
- The proposed soak-away to the package treatment plant would be close to the boundary and could discharge into the neighbouring field, potentially causing welfare issues for cattle.

### **Main policies**

Relevant Core Strategy policies: GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, GSP4, DS1, L1, L2, L3 and HC1

Relevant Local Plan policies: LC4, LC8, LC15, LC16, LC17, LT11 and LT18

### **National planning policy framework**

26. 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 with regard to the issues that are raised.

### **Development plan**

27. Core Strategy policies GSP1, GSP2 and GSP3 together say that all development in the National Park must be consistent with the National Park’s legal purposes and duty and that the Sandford Principle will be applied where there is conflict. Opportunities for

enhancing the valued characteristics of the National Park will be identified and acted upon and development which would enhance the valued characteristics of the National Park will be permitted. Particular attention will be paid to impact on the character and setting of buildings, siting, landscaping and building materials, design in accordance with the Design Guide and the impact upon living conditions of local communities. CS policy GSP4 highlights that the National Park Authority will consider using planning conditions or obligations to secure the achievement of its spatial outcomes.

28. Core Strategy policy DS1 states that in the countryside the conversion or change of use of traditional buildings for housing will be acceptable in principle. Core Strategy policy HC1 says that new housing will only be permitted in the National Park in exceptional circumstances. HC1. C. says that one circumstance is where development is required to achieve the conservation or enhancement of a valued vernacular or listed building.
29. Core Strategy policy L1 says that all development must conserve or enhance the landscape character of the National Park. Core Strategy policy L3 says that all development must conserve or enhance the significance of our heritage assets and their setting and that development that has a harmful impact will not be permitted unless there are exceptional circumstances.
30. Saved local plan policies LC4, LC8, LC15 and LC16 provide more detailed criteria to assess design, landscaping and impact upon archaeological significance.
31. Core Strategy policy L2 says that all development must conserve or enhance the biodiversity of the National Park. Saved local plan policy LC17 provides more detailed criteria for the assessment of development upon designated sites, species and habitats.
32. Saved local plan policies LC11 and LC18 require adequate off-street parking and safe access to be provided as a pre-requisite of all development within the National Park.

#### Emerging development management policies

33. The Authority's emerging Development Management Policies Document is not yet adopted but is now at an advanced stage. These policies therefore can be given significant weight as a material planning consideration in the assessment of the application.
34. Policy DMC5 says that applications for development affecting a heritage asset must clearly demonstrate its significance including how any identified features of value will be conserved and where possible enhanced and why the proposed development is desirable or necessary.
35. Policy DMC10 says that conversion of a heritage asset will be permitted provided that it can accommodate the new use without changes that adversely affect its character. Proposals under policy HC1. C. I. will only be permitted where the building is a designated or non-designated heritage asset and it can be demonstrated that conversion to a market dwelling is required in order to achieve the conservation and where appropriate, enhancement of the significance of the heritage asset and its setting.

#### **Assessment**

##### Whether the development is acceptable in principle

36. The barn is located in open countryside outside of Stoney Middleton and adjacent to Middleton Lane. Planning permission has been granted for conversion of the barn to holiday accommodation. The most recent planning permission, granted in 2017, has not been implemented but remains extant.
37. When considering the application in 2017 we determined that the barn is a traditional outfarm that makes a positive contribution to the historic landscape and therefore is a non-designated heritage asset. We concluded that proposed conversion to holiday accommodation conserved the significance of the barn and its setting.
38. This application proposes the conversion of the barn to a market dwelling. The proposed design is identical to the scheme previously approved.
39. The character of the building and its setting has not changed and the senior archaeologist remains of the opinion that the building possess historic and archaeological significance. Therefore we still consider that the building is a non-designated heritage asset.
40. Our policies support the principle of converting buildings such as this barn to market dwellings provided that the development is required to secure the conservation or enhancement of the building. This is therefore the key issue in the determination of the application.

#### Impact of the development upon the building and its setting

41. The senior archaeologist raises concerns that the conversion of the building to residential use will harm its significance and that the application contains insufficient information to assess the impact of the conversion on significance.
42. We have previously determined that it is not necessary for a heritage statement to be provided to understand the significance of the building as an outfarm or assess the potential impacts of the development. However, emerging development plan policy DMC5 should be given significant weight and requires an assessment of significance to be provided and reflects paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
43. We have discussed this issue with the agent and a heritage statement has now been submitted in support of the application. We have re-consulted the senior archaeologist and we will update members at the meeting on any further comments.
44. The barn is not located within an existing group of buildings but is in a roadside position where there is sporadic agricultural and domestic development leaving Stoney Middleton. The proposal is to convert the building without extension and uses the existing access with the garden and parking area around the rear of the building.
45. The design of the scheme is sensitive and in accordance with our design guide because it uses existing openings and proposes new timber windows and doors of a suitable design along with metal rainwater goods and conservation roof lights. A structural report has been submitted to justify the demolition of the later single storey element which would be re-built to match the appearance of the existing structure.
46. Therefore we agree with the heritage statement that while the development would result in some harm to the significance of the barn that this would be very limited and outweighed by the benefits of securing the long-term conservation of the building. The development would not harm the character of the historic landscape or the setting of the nearby grade II listed Highfields Farmhouse or the Stoney Middleton conservation

area.

47. The proposed curtilage would be limited to a modest area to the rear of the building. This is the same area we approved for the holiday let scheme. Parked cars and domestic activity here would not be visible from the roadside or prominent in the wider landscape and therefore we consider that the use of the building as a market dwelling would not be more harmful than use as a holiday let and is therefore equally acceptable in policy terms.
48. The principle of the proposed conversion rests upon impact upon the significance of the building. If permission was granted it would be essential to impose planning conditions to control design details, landscaping, lighting, boundary treatments and to remove permitted development rights for domestic alterations, extensions and outbuildings. There are exceptional circumstances to remove permitted development rights because further development could harm the significance of the building and the landscape.
49. We therefore conclude that the development is required to achieve conservation of the building and is in accordance with: core strategy policies L1, L3 and HC1; saved local plan policies LC4, LC8, LC15 and LC16 and emerging development management policies.

#### Impact of the development upon biodiversity

50. A protected species survey has been submitted with the application. This survey and the results of previous surveys have shown that the barn is used by brown long-eared and common pipistrelle bats for roosting. Activity surveys were carried out in 2017 and the report says that a further activity survey is required but only provide up-to-date information about the status of the bat roosts and to inform appropriate mitigation. The report states that further survey is only required for a development licence from Natural England and is not required for planning purposes.
51. The report states that work must not be carried out in the maternity roosting season of May – September. And mitigation will be required such as provision for bats to roost within the building by creating voids in the roof and installing bat boxes into the walls. Traditional bitumen hessian underfelt would need to be used for the roof and roof timbers treated by using approved chemicals for bat roosts. Any external lighting would need to be limited.
52. Barn swallows and other bird species have in the past nested in the barn and therefore works must not be carried out in the bird breeding season of March to August unless a breeding bird survey has been undertaken with finding to inform the best method to avoid impacting upon nesting birds. Compensation for loss of nesting sites should be provided including nest boxes and replacement nesting sites for barn swallows.
53. We consider that the planning application is supported by sufficient information to inform the potential impact of the development upon protected species at the site. If permission is granted planning conditions would be necessary to require the approval and implementation of mitigation and enhancement features for bats and birds and to prohibit development within the bird breeding and maternity roosting seasons (March to September).
54. These conditions are necessary to ensure that the development conserves and enhances the biodiversity of the National Park and to secure the favourable conservation status of protected species on the site in accordance with: core strategy policy L2; saved local plan policy LC17 and emerging development management policies.



### Other issues

55. Given the distance between the barn and the nearest neighbouring properties we consider that occupants of the development would have sufficient privacy and that the development would not harm the privacy, amenity or security of any neighbouring properties. Occupants of the development would have a private amenity space.
56. Concern has been raised that occupants of the development would be more likely to be affected by noise and smell from livestock kept in the agricultural buildings to the west of the site. We acknowledge that noise and smell would be noticeable to occupants of the proposed dwelling, however, the barn is separated from the buildings by a field and is of a sufficient distance that there would not be a significant impact. This relationship of domestic properties and working farms is not uncommon in the local area.
57. There is sufficient visibility from the access onto Middleton Lane and ample turning and parking space within the proposed curtilage to the rear of the barn. We therefore consider that the development would not harm highway safety.
58. The proposed development is therefore considered to be in accordance with: core strategy policy GSP3 and saved local plan policies LC4, LT11 and LT18.

### Conclusion

59. We conclude that the proposal is required to conserve the significance of the barn which is a non-designated heritage asset and therefore the conversion of the barn to a market dwelling is acceptable in principle. The proposal will conserve the landscape character of the National Park and its biodiversity and will not harm highway safety or the amenity of neighbouring properties.
60. Therefore the proposal is considered to be acceptable subject to the imposition of planning conditions. In the absence of any further material considerations we consider that the proposal is in accordance with the development plan and we recommend the application for approval.

### Human Rights

61. Any human rights issues have been considered and addressed in the preparation of this report.

### List of Background Papers (not previously published)

62. Nil

**Report Author**, Adam Maxwell - Senior Planner