

**12. FULL APPLICATION – CONVERSION OF BARN TO HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION AT BARN AT CARR LANE, WETTON (NP/SM/0319/0271, MN)**

**APPLICANT: MS PATTY DEPPE AND MR P ATKINSON**

**Summary**

1. The proposed development seeks to convert a former field barn to holiday accommodation.
2. Subject to conditions the development would conserve the heritage interest of the building, would provide holiday accommodation in accordance with the Authority's adopted planning policies, and would not result in adverse planning impacts.
3. Accordingly, the application is recommended for approval.

**Site and surroundings**

4. The building subject to the development proposal is a modestly sized barn located on the southern edge of the village of Wetton, in the northern corner of a field immediately adjacent to the village car park and toilet block.
5. The car park and toilet block are immediately northeast and east of the building, whilst the southeastern and southwestern boundaries of the field are bounded by the adjacent highways. The northwestern boundary is bounded by further fields.
6. The building is in a state of disrepair, without a roof and with one of the gable walls and part of the rear wall having collapsed.
7. The site is within the Wetton conservation area.

**Proposal**

8. To convert and partly rebuild an existing barn to provide a single bedroomed holiday let unit, including the creation of a new roadside parking space.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

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

1. **3 year implementation period.**
2. **Development to be carried out in accordance with specified amended plans.**
3. **Rebuilding limited to that specified in the submitted structural report.**
4. **Holiday occupancy restriction.**
5. **Extent of use limited to the building itself and the parking bay, with the remainder of the field excluded.**
6. **Conditions securing the proposed protected species mitigation measures (excluding the proposed hedgerow), and the additional measures recommended by the Authority's ecologist.**

7. All new stonework to match the existing.
8. Sample of roof material to be approved.
9. Conditions securing architectural design details.
10. All services to be undergrounded.
11. Details of foul water disposal to be approved.
12. Details of surfacing to parking bay to be approved.
13. Design and appearance of new gates to be approved.
14. Parking to be provided prior to the approved use commencing.
15. Scheme of archaeological recording and monitoring to be approved.

### **Key Issues**

- Whether the development is suitable for conversion under the Authority's recreation and tourism policies
- The impact of the development on the character and appearance of the building
- The landscape impacts of the development
- The ecological impacts of the development
- Archaeological impacts of the development

### **History**

2018 – Planning application submitted for conversion of barn to holiday accommodation – withdrawn prior to determination.

### **Consultations**

9. Highway Authority – No objections subject to the development not being brought into use until the access drive has been completed.
10. Parish Council – Object to the proposal because they feel strongly that there should not be any more holiday lets in the parish. Their view is that they are destroying the community and produce noise and nuisance.
11. Authority's Conservation Officer – No response at time of writing.
12. Authority's Archaeologist – Raised concerns regarding the archaeological impacts of the originally-proposed extension, which has since been omitted from the proposal. Advise that works associated with clearance within the building and establishing the car parking area could encounter and destroy archaeological remains. They conclude that if the proposals be considered acceptable with respect to planning balance, they would recommend that the impacts detailed above be mitigated through a conditioned scheme of building recording and archaeological monitoring. Wording for such a condition is suggested.
13. Authority's Ecologist – No objections subject to following the recommendations of the submitted protected species report, and to a condition to agree details of how the grassland and scrub habitats will be enhanced for wildlife.

14. Natural England – No objections.

### **Representations**

15. One letter of representation has been received, querying whether the village needs more holiday lets.

### **Main policies**

16. Relevant Core Strategy policies: GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, DS1, L2, L3, and RT2.

17. Relevant Development Management Plan policies: DMC3, DMC5, DMC10, DMT8.

### **National planning policy framework**

18. 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 which are to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage and 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.

19. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has been revised (2019). This replaces the previous document (2012) 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 particular Paragraph 172 states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.

20. In the National Park the development plan comprises the Authority's Core Strategy 2011 and the Adopted Development Management Policies. 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 government guidance in the NPPF with regard to the issues that are raised.

### **Development plan**

21. 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. Core Strategy policy GSP4 highlights that the National Park Authority will consider using planning conditions or obligations to secure the achievement of its spatial outcomes.

22. Core Strategy policy DS1 outlines the Authority's Development Strategy, and in principle permits the conversion of buildings to provide visitor accommodation.

23. Core Strategy policy RT2 says that proposals for hotels, bed and breakfast and self-catering accommodation must conform to the following principles:

- A. The change of use of a traditional building of historic or vernacular merit to serviced or self-catering holiday accommodation will be permitted, except where it would create unacceptable landscape impact in open countryside. The change of use of entire farmsteads to holiday accommodation will not be permitted.
- B. Appropriate minor developments which extend or make quality improvements to existing holiday accommodation will be permitted.
- C. New build holiday accommodation will not be permitted, except for a new hotel in Bakewell.

24. Core Strategy policy L2 states that development must conserve and enhance any sites,

25. Core Strategy policy L3 requires that development must conserve and where appropriate enhance or reveal significance of archaeological, artistic or historic asset and their setting, including statutory designation and other heritage assets of international, national, regional or local importance or special interest.

26. Development Management Policy DMC3 requires development to be of a high standard that respects, protects, and where possible enhances the natural beauty, quality and visual amenity of the landscape, including the wildlife and cultural heritage that contribute to the distinctive sense of place. It also provides further detailed criteria to assess design and landscaping, as well as requiring development to conserve the amenity of other properties.

27. Development Management Policy DMC5 provides detailed advice relating to proposals affecting heritage assets and their settings, requiring new development to demonstrate how valued features will be conserved, as well as detailing the types and levels of information required to support such proposals. It also requires development to avoid harm to the significance, character, and appearance of heritage assets and details the exceptional circumstances in which development resulting in such harm may be supported.

28. Development Management Policy DMC10 addresses conversion of heritage assets, permitting this where the new use would conserve its character and significance, and where the new use and associated infrastructure conserve the asset, its setting, and valued landscape character. It also notes that new uses or curtilages should not be visually intrusive in the landscape or have an adverse impact on tranquility, dark skies, or other valued characteristics.

29. Development Management Policy DMT8 states that off-street parking for residential development should be provided unless it can be demonstrated that on-street parking meets highways standards and does not negatively impact on the visual and other amenity of the local community. It notes that the design and number of parking spaces must respect the valued characteristics of the area, particularly in conservation areas.

## **Assessment**

### **Principle**

30. Policy RT2 supports the conversion of buildings to holiday accommodation only where they are traditional buildings of historic or vernacular merit.

31. The building in question does have such interest, having been present on the site for over 100 years, albeit appearing to have at one time been larger, with historic mapping indicating that it extended further north-east. Whilst in a poor condition, it retains a

form, materials and openings characteristic of local barns and its position at the entrance to the village means that it plays an important role in the appearance of the conservation area and more general landscape. The submitted heritage statement also concludes that, whilst the building has lost some significance through its deterioration, it does still possess a degree of significance in heritage terms. The building is therefore still considered to be a heritage asset, despite its condition.

32. Policy DMC10 makes it clear that conversions of heritage assets will only be permitted when the conversion would not adversely affect its character, such as when major rebuilding is required.
33. We had reservations regarding the buildings condition, and whether it was actually possible to convert what remains of the building without it amounting to a new-build property. The applicant has carried out a structural appraisal however, which concludes that the existing fabric can – for the most part – be re-used and built upon, rather than needing to be taken down. Given this, and that the front wall, south-western gable, and parts of the other walls do remain standing we are satisfied that the development would represent a conversion rather than an entirely new building.
34. We are also satisfied that, on balance, there is enough historic fabric remaining to justify a conversion scheme to a holiday let. The policy bar for conversions to holiday lets is not as high as for open market dwellings. This building does not retain enough historic significance to warrant a conversion to an open market dwelling and a condition limiting the use to a holiday let is therefore necessary.
35. The acceptability of the scheme is however subject to a condition restricting any rebuilding being limited to that shown on the submitted plans and structural appraisal. Anything further would be likely to result in an entirely new building being constructed, which would undermine the policy justification – i.e. conservation of a heritage asset – for approving the development in the first place. If it transpired that the building required demolition and rebuild then it is very unlikely that the development would be acceptable in principle.
36. We note the concerns of the Parish Council, but planning policy supports the provision of holiday accommodation through conversion of buildings within the National Park where it can meet the purposes of helping to conserve the cultural heritage of the area, promoting enjoyment and understanding of the Park, and contributing to the local economy.
37. Subject to such a condition, conversion of the building to a holiday let property would therefore comply with policy RT2 and policy DMC10.

#### Impacts on the character and appearance of the building

38. The proposal has been amended since submission in response to our advice, omitting an originally proposed rear extension and making changes to window detailing and rooflight sizing.
39. As now proposed, the conversion builds up from the existing walls and works with existing openings to the front and side gable. There has needed to be some conjecture when arriving at the proposed design of some of the other side gable and rear wall due to this being partly collapsed and there being no evidence of its former appearance available. However, this takes a form and design approach that is in keeping with the rest of the building and typical of the appearance of local barns.
40. The development also largely avoids domestication of the buildings setting. It does not

include any curtilage around the building, and a single parking space it proposed adjacent to the highway. Subject to a condition restricting the change of use to only the building and parking bay, and not to the field in which the building sits, this would conserve the setting of the building.

41. A new roof will be required as will new stonework for the necessary rebuilding works and it is recommended that details of these are secured by condition in order to ensure that they are sympathetic to the buildings character and appearance.
42. Similarly, detailed design matters such as ensuring appropriate rainwater goods, internally routed pipework, roof verges, pointing, window frames and doors should also be secured by conditions to ensure that the agricultural and vernacular character of the barn is conserved.
43. In summary, the building is currently in a dilapidated state and the proposed conversion would reinstate it in a sympathetic manner. As a result, the development would not result in harm to the character or appearance of the building subject to conditions, complying with policies L3, DMC3, DMC5, and DMC10.

#### Impacts on the character and appearance of the landscape

44. Being positioned immediately adjacent to other buildings, near to the highway, and on the edge of the village means that the barn does not appear isolated. Because of this and the low level of domestic activity associated with the proposed use (due to its size the building would accommodate only a single bedroom), it would not result in any significant change to landscape character in the locality.
45. As noted above, a condition would be necessary to restrict the holiday let use to the building and parking bay only; not only to conserve the agricultural setting of the barn but to ensure that this remains reflective of the wider agricultural landscape in the area.
46. A block plan and annotated photographs have been submitted that detail the position and appearance of the proposed parking bay. This would have a limited impact on the character of the landscape given its roadside position, but it would be necessary to reserve details of the surfacing of this area and the design of the proposed gates by condition if permission was granted.
47. Subject to such a condition, the development would conserve the landscape character of the area as required by policies L1, DMC3, and DMC10.

#### Ecological impacts

48. The application has been accompanied by a bat report, which concludes that the building has the potential to provide hibernation habitat for bats. A further report detailing mitigation measures for both bats and birds has been provided, which also accords with the recommendations of the Authority's ecologist in relation to these species.
49. It also proposes a new hedgerow to provide additional foraging habitat. In principle, this is a positive recommendation that would provide some ecological gain. However, the siting of a hedgerow parallel to the existing stone wall forming the northeastern boundary of the site would appear out of keeping, because there is already a boundary treatment to this side of the field and because all of the other fields in the immediate locality are bounded exclusively by stone walls rather than hedges.
50. The Authority's ecologist has recommended that in order to provide biodiversity gain a

plan should be drawn up to provide details of how the grassland and scrub habitats will be enhanced for wildlife. This could provide ecological gains that do not result in the harm to landscape character that the hedgerow would, and so it is recommended that a condition is imposed omitting the hedgerow but requiring this alternative mitigation, if permission is granted.

51. Subject to securing the recommended bat and bird mitigation and enhancement measures discussed above the proposal would conserve the ecological interests of the site as required by policy LC2.

#### Archaeological impacts

52. The Authority's archaeologist advises that the site is of historic and archaeological interest. This is because the building dates back to at least the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the site forms part of an area of ancient enclosure, and also due to the potential for below ground archaeological remains relating to the previous development associated with Wetton, which was once a larger settlement.
53. In terms of the building itself, the archaeologist raised concerns that the design as originally submitted would not conserve the archaeology of the building – most notably the proposed rear extension. This and other elements highlighted by the archaeologist in their comments have since been omitted and otherwise amended. Whilst a rooflight remains – something that the archaeologist noted as an uncharacteristic feature – it has been significantly reduced in scale.
54. They also advise that works involved in clearing the interior of the barn prior to renovation could encounter and destroy archaeological remains, as could any groundworks associated with the construction of the parking bay.
55. They conclude that the development as originally submitted would result in minor archaeological harm, and advise that if the development is concluded to be acceptable with regard to the planning balance then conditions should be imposed to record any archaeological interest and to monitor the development.
56. As noted, some of the archaeologists concerns have been addressed through revision. In terms of the planning balance, the scheme would result in other planning benefits; including retaining the contribution that the building makes to the landscape in this location, and providing holiday accommodation to promote enjoyment and understanding of the National Park.
57. Given the low level of archaeological harm identified we conclude that these benefits would outweigh the archaeological harm in this instance.

#### Amenity impacts

58. Due to the position of the building away from any other residential property the proposed development would not result in any loss of privacy, any additional disturbance, or otherwise affect the amenity of any other residential property, complying with policy DMC3.

#### Highway impacts

59. The development would introduce a single roadside parking space. This is sufficient to meet the parking needs for a single bedroomed holiday let property.

60. The highway authority have advised on the design and layout of the parking arrangements and have raised no objections to the proposal.
61. We have no other highway safety or amenity concerns regarding the use of the site for holiday accommodation and therefore conclude that the development would have acceptable highway impacts and would comply with DMT8.

#### Service provision

62. Details of power and water supply to the site have not been submitted with the application. It would be important for these to be routed underground to ensure that they did not impact on the character of the site and setting of the building. In the case of approval a condition is therefore recommended to secure this.
63. Details of and how foul water arising from the development would be dealt with are also not available, and so it is recommended that these are also reserved by condition if permission is granted to ensure that they avoid groundwater pollution as well as landscape and built environment harm.

#### Conclusion

64. We conclude that as amended the proposal will conserve character and appearance of the building and those of the landscape, and would conserve the ecological interests of the site in accordance with policies L2, L3, DMC3, DMC5, and DMC10.
65. There are no other policy or material considerations that would indicate that planning permission should be refused.
66. We therefore recommend the application for conditional approval.

#### 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

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