

10. FULL APPLICATION – DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BARN AND REPLACEMENT AGRICULTURAL BARN AT BLAKELOW COTTAGE, BUTTERTON MOOR BANK, BUTTERTON (NP/SM/0319/0213, ALN)

APPLICANT: MR ANDREW JOHNSON

Summary

1. The application is for a modestly sized portal framed shed that in its amended position would not be harmful to the Conservation Area, the setting of the listed building or to trees. The application is recommended for approval.

Site and surroundings

2. Blakelow Cottage is a grade II listed building situated on the western edge of the village of Butterton, on the northern side of the main street through the village. To the west of the listed cottage is a field parcel with an area of approximately 0.5 hectare. At present there is a small, dilapidated timber shed on the northern boundary of the field together with a number of small poultry pens/sheds. The site is within the Butterton Conservation Area.

Proposal

3. Planning permission is sought for the removal of the timber shed and replacement with a larger, portal framed agricultural building. The building would measure 8.9m long by 5.9m wide and with a height of 3m to the eaves and 3.4m to the ridge. It would be clad in vertical timber boarding on the sides, and slate grey sheeting on the roof.
4. The building would be positioned close to the northern boundary of the field parcel and approximately 45m to the west of the listed building. As amended it would be orientated with its ridge running east to west and with doors on its south elevation facing towards the open field.

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. **Soft landscaping scheme to be submitted and agreed.**
4. **Remove when no longer required for agriculture.**
5. **Timber boarding to be stained dark brown at the time of erection.**
6. **Tree protection plan and arboricultural method statement to be submitted and agreed.**
7. **Any spoil from ground excavations to be removed from the site and disposed of at a licenced waste centre.**
8. **No hardstanding unless agreed by the National Park Authority.**

- 9. Existing timber shed and chicken coops to the east of the site for the building to be removed within 3 months of the building being first brought into use.**

Key Issues

- Agricultural justification.
- Impact on character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- Impact on Trees.

History

5. There is no planning history relating to the field in question. The following relates to the dwellinghouse:
6. November 2012 – planning permission granted for retention of timber shed permanently and oil fired boiler.
7. February 2003 – planning permission granted temporarily (10 years) for erection of 3m by 5m shed.
8. July 1986 – planning permission granted for new vehicular access.
9. December 1985 – listed building granted for alteration to dwelling.

Consultations

10. Highway Authority – no response to date.
11. Parish Council – object to the proposals on the following grounds:
 - The location of the building will have a detrimental impact on the Conservation area and will be immediately visible to anyone entering the village on this the main approach road into the Parish.
 - The implication that the property has always constituted a smallholding is incorrect. It has always been a cottage (once upon a time 2 semi-detached listed properties) with an adjacent paddock.
 - Much of the boundary adjacent to the road is not screened and it will take many years for a screen of trees to come to fruition.
 - The actual placement of the barn is unsuitable.
 - The supposed existing 'barn' is no more than a temporary shed.
 - The keeping of livestock is inconsistent to the development of a wildflower meadow.

The Parish Council was re-consulted on the amended plans but has maintained its objections.

12. Authority's Tree Conservation Officer – no objections subject to conditions. The proposed development will require the removal of a mature ash tree. The ash tree is situated in a highly visible position as part of a row of trees along a field boundary. However, the tree is not in a good condition and would require significant remedial works or removal in the near future.
13. Authority's Archaeologist – no objections.

Representations

14. No representations were received during the public consultation period.

Main policies

15. Relevant Core Strategy policies: GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, DS1, and L3.
16. Relevant Development Management Plan policies: DMC3, DMC5, DMC8, DMC13, DME1

Legislation

17. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out that the Local Planning Authority has a duty to have special regard to preserving or enhancing the character of conservation areas,

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. As the development relates to a site within a conservation area, section 16 of the NPPF is particularly relevant. Paragraph 193 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 (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
21. 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 more recent Government guidance in the NPPF with regard to the issues that are raised.

Development plan

22. 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.

23. 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.
24. Development Management Plan Policy DME1 allows for new agricultural buildings provided that they are functionally required, are close to the main group of buildings wherever possible and in all cases relates well to existing buildings and landscape features, respects the design of existing buildings and building traditions, makes use of the least obtrusive location and does not require obtrusive access tracks, roads or services.
25. Development Management Plan policy DMC3 provides detailed criteria to assess design and landscaping.
26. DMC5 sets out that development that would harm designated heritage assets will not be permitted unless clear and convincing justification exists.
27. Development Management Plan policy DMC13 states that planning applications should provide sufficient information to enable their impact on trees to be properly considered. Where development that involves risk of damage to trees is acceptable, adequate space must be left for their replacement.

Assessment

Agricultural Justification

28. An agricultural justification statement has been submitted with the application. It explains that the applicant currently has two sheep but hopes to increase numbers to 6 in the near future. He also has a flock of rare breed hens. In the past a crop of 120 bales of hay has been taken from the field. It is stated that the existing timber shed is small and dilapidated and not fit for purpose. It is intended that the new building would provide housing for the poultry, space for lambing and storage space for one tractor, a topper/mower and a baler.
29. Clearly because of the small area of land in ownership the agricultural operations that are taking place at Blakelow Cottage are extremely small scale and are more akin to a 'hobby farm' than a substantial agricultural business. The agricultural justification for a new farm building is therefore on the face of it fairly weak. However the scale of the proposed building is modest and commensurate with the limited area of land in ownership and the current and proposed stock levels. Therefore on balance subject to consideration of impact on the character of the area and on trees, in principle we consider that the replacement building is justified to manage the land.

Impact on character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

30. The Conservation Area for Butterton not only encompasses the majority of the built form of the village but also the fields that sit adjacent to the edge of the village and which form the setting for the historic settlement. The parcel of land in question is one such field which sits on the western edge of the village.
31. The field is located adjacent to the northern side of Butterton Moor Bank and the building would be positioned on its northern boundary, some 60m from the road. As submitted the building was positioned in a rather arbitrary location jutting out into the open field. We considered that this would have resulted in the building being poorly related to surrounding features. As a result amended plans have been received showing it turned

by 90 degrees and pushed further north so that it is adjacent to the field boundary wall. Whilst normally it would be preferable to locate a new building further east so that it is closer to the house (in accordance with policy DME1) in this case, because the cottage is grade II listed a more closely positioned building would cause harm to its setting. The proposed building would have no detrimental impact on the setting of the Listed Building in the position that has been selected.

32. Because of the surrounding topography the building would only become visible when travelling into the village along Butterton Moor Bank upon reaching the gateway to the adjacent property known as 'Bollands Hall'. It would then be visible along approximately 100m stretch of the road. From further to the east in the village, the building would be hidden from view by other buildings, trees and land levels.
33. The applicant has planted a number of trees along the roadside boundary wall which once fully matured will provide some cover to the building in the summer months.. He has agreed to a landscaping condition to provide additional low level planting in the form of a native hedgerow. Also additional tree planting is required on the south western corner of the field. Additional tree planning would not be out of keeping with the character of the Conservation Area at this point because many of the fields that surround the village have either trees or hedgerows growing along their boundaries.
34. The sides of the building would be clad in vertical timber boarding, it is modest in size and would be set well back from the road. Subject to conditions to secure the additional planting and to stain the boarding a dark colour it is not considered that the building would cause harm to the character of the Conservation Area in accordance with policies L3, DMC2, DMC5, DMC8 and DME1. In addition a condition to require the removal of the existing timber building and the chicken sheds would result in some enhancement to the area.
35. There are a number of mature trees growing along the northern boundary of the field parcel. During the course of the application an arboricultural survey has been submitted. A mature ash tree would be affected by the amended location for the building but the trees survey categorises the tree as poor due to fungal growth, a weak fork and deadwood. The report recommends that the tree be felled and the Authority's Tree Conservation Officer concurs with this view. Replacement trees will be required as part of the landscaping condition.

Conclusion

36. We conclude that as amended the proposal will conserve character of the Conservation Area and the setting of the host Listed Building and will not cause unacceptable harm to trees in accordance with policies GSP3, L3, DMC5, DMC8, DMC3, DMC13 and DME1 and the guidance contained within section 16 of the NPPF. 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

37. Report Author: Andrea Needham, Senior Planner (South)