

7. FULL APPLICATION – TWO STOREY DETACHED RESIDENTIAL UNITS TO EXISTING CARE HOME AT THE LODGE, MANCHESTER ROAD, HOLLOW MEADOWS (NP/S/1019/1109 AM)

APPLICANT: MOORVILLE RESIDENTIAL

Summary

1. The site includes a former dwelling which has been converted and extended to create a care home. The site is located in open countryside at Hollow Meadows.
2. The application proposes the erection of 3 residential units to provide additional accommodation for the care home. Each unit would be a self-contained dwelling with 3 bedrooms providing accommodation for two residents and a carer if required.
3. We recommend refusal because the application is contrary to our adopted housing policies, the development would have a harmful visual and landscape impact and because insufficient information has been provided in respect of climate change mitigation, trees and biodiversity.

Site and Surroundings

4. The Lodge is located to the north of the A57 at Hollow Meadows. The property is a former dwelling now converted and extended to a residential care home following the grant of planning permission (see planning history section of the report). The property was originally associated with the old Hollow Meadows hospital located immediately to the east (now converted to housing).
5. The building is two storey and constructed in natural gritstone under a blue slate roof. The recently approved extension is also two storey, located to the west of the original building and linked to it by a conservatory. The property is set well back from the A57 and is accessed by a private driveway. The nearest neighbouring properties are the dwellings located in the former hospital to the east.

Proposal

6. The erection of two storey residential units to the rear of the existing care home.
7. The plans show 2 buildings sited to the rear of the care home. The remaining unit would be sited on the west boundary. The buildings would comprise three, two-storey units with stone walls, pitched concrete tile roofs and uPVC doors and windows. Each two-storey unit would measure 12.6m long by 6.8m wide. Two of the units would be linked by a single storey conservatory and sited parallel to the north boundary. Each of the two-storey units would have a similar design to match the existing building to the rear of the Lodge which is a former garage now converted to residential use.
8. Each two-storey unit would provide residential accommodation with two bedrooms, lounge and two bathrooms at ground floor and an additional bedroom, lounge and bathroom at first floor. Each unit would therefore have 3 bedrooms and a floor space of approximately 120 square meters (excluding linking conservatory).
9. The application states that each unit would accommodate 2 residents (with additional accommodation available for carers as required).

RECOMMENDATION:

That the application be REFUSED for the following reasons:

- 1. The erection of residential accommodation on the site is contrary to Core Strategy policies DS1 and HC1, which restrict new housing in the National Park to affordable housing to meet eligible local need within named settlements. The proposed therefore would represent unsustainable development contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework.**
- 2. It is considered that by virtue of its form, design and siting, the proposed development would harm the landscape and the character and appearance of the existing building contrary to Core Strategy policies GSP1, GSP2, GS3, DS1 and L1, Development Management policies DMC1 and DMC3, our adopted design guidance and the National Planning Policy Framework.**
- 3. Insufficient information has been submitted to allow us to conclude that the development would be designed to mitigate the impacts of climate change by making the most efficient and sustainable use of land, buildings and natural resources, take account of the energy hierarchy and achieve the highest possible standards of carbon reductions and water efficiency contrary to Core Strategy policy CC1, our adopted Sustainable Building and Climate change SPD and the National Planning Policy Framework.**
- 4. Insufficient information has been submitted to allow us to conclude that the development would safeguard trees on site, conserve local wildlife or that the development would achieve net gains to biodiversity contrary to Core Strategy policy L2, Development Management policies DMC11, DMC12 or DMC13 and the National Planning Policy Framework.**

Key Issues

- Whether the proposed development is acceptable in principle.
- The design and scale of the proposed residential units and the impact upon the character, appearance and amenity of the existing building, its setting and that of neighbouring properties.

History

1987: Planning permission granted for extension.

2007: Planning permission refused for two storey rear extension.

2011: Planning permission granted for conversion of garage to gym and granny flat.

2015: Planning permission granted for first floor extension over existing kitchen.

2017: Planning permission granted conditionally for change of use to care home for adults with autism and learning difficulties and retention of access.

2018: Planning permission granted conditionally for extension to care home.

2018: Planning permission granted conditionally for single storey and two-storey extension to care home.

The applicant has not sought pre-application advice before submitting the current application.

Consultations

Highway Authority – No response to date.

District Council – No response to date.

Parish Council – No response to date.

Representations

10. 13 representation letters have been received at the time this report was written. 9 letters object to the application and 4 support. The material planning reasons for objection and support are summarised below.

Objection

The development will harm the rural character of the area.

The development would harm the landscape of the Peak District National Park.

The existing lodge has already being doubled in size through extensions and the development would further develop the site harming the area.

The development will result in additional vehicles accessing the site.

The development is in an un-sustainable location with no regular bus service. Further development will increase the carbon footprint of the development.

The design of the development is not in keeping with the character of other properties in the area.

The development will result in intrusive security lighting.

The development would overlook the neighbouring property and result in a loss of privacy.

The development would harm highway safety due to intensification of a poor access.

Object to applications being made in stages where the development as a whole would not be acceptable.

There is no need for the proposed development.

Support

The development would not harm neighbouring properties as there is plenty of space and they do not encroach.

The development would provide opportunities to give highly vulnerable people a more settled stable life.

There is a significant need for residential care units such as these. It is important that care facilities for people with complex needs and who cannot live in the community are provided.

Main Policies

Relevant Core Strategy policies: GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, DS1, L1, CC1, HC1 and T2

Relevant Development Management policies: DMC1, DMC3, DMC11, DMC12, DMC13, DMC14, DMH1, DMH2, DMH3, DMH11, DMT3, DMT8 DMU1 and DMU2.

National Planning Policy Framework

11. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration and carries particular weight when a development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date. Our policies are up-to-date and provide a clear starting point consistent with our statutory purposes and should therefore be given full weight in determining the application.
12. Paragraph 172 of the NPPF says 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.
13. Paragraph 77 of the NPPF says in rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. We should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs, and consider whether allowing some market housing on these sites would help to facilitate this.
14. Paragraph 78 of the NPPF says to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.
15. Paragraph 79 of the NPPF says that planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:
 - a) there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;
 - b) the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;
 - c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;
 - d) the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential dwelling; or
 - e) the design is of exceptional quality.
16. Paragraph 130 of the NPPF says that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents.

Core Strategy

17. Policy GSP1 sets out the broad strategy for achieving our objectives having regard to the Sandford Principle. We must achieve sustainable development and only allow major development where it is essential.
18. Policy GSP3 sets out our 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, design in accordance with our design guide and impact on living conditions of communities.
19. Policy L1 says that development must conserve and enhance valued landscape character and valued characteristics.
20. Policy DS1 sets out our development strategy to promote a sustainable distribution and level of growth that will support the effective conservation and enhancement of the National Park. The site is in the countryside where new housing or community facilities are only acceptable in principle through conversion or change of use.
21. Policy CC1 says that in order to build in resilience to and mitigate the cause of climate change all development must make the most efficient and sustainable use of land, buildings and natural resources, take account of the energy hierarchy, be directed away from flood risk areas and achieve the highest possible standards of carbon reductions and water efficiency.
22. Policy HC1 says that provision will not be made for new housing solely to meet open market demand. New housing can be accepted where it addresses eligible local needs for homes that remain affordable with occupation restricted to local people in perpetuity or for aged persons' assisted living accommodation including residential institutions offering care where adequate care or assistance cannot be provided within the existing housing stock.

Development Management policies

23. Policy DMC3 says that where development is acceptable in principle, it will be permitted provided that its detailed treatment is of a high standard that 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. DMC3 B. says particular attention will be paid to: siting, scale, form, mass levels, height and orientation; design and materials, landscaping, access, sustainable drainage, amenity, accessibility and our design guide.
24. Policy DMC11 says that development should aim to achieve net gains to biodiversity as a result of development. All reasonable measures must be taken to avoid net loss. DMC11 B. says that details of appropriate safeguards and enhancement measures for nature conservation interests that could be affected by the development must be provided.
25. Policy DMC13 says that planning applications should provide sufficient information to enable impact on trees and woodland to be properly considered. Trees and hedgerows that positively contribute to the visual amenity or biodiversity of the area will be protected and loss of these features will not be permitted.
26. Policy DMC14 says that development that presents a risk of pollution or disturbance will not be permitted unless adequate control measures are put in place to bring the

pollution within acceptable limits.

27. Policy DMH1 is relevant for new affordable housing and says that new affordable housing will be permitted in or on the edge of settlements designated by policy DS1 provided that there is a proven need for the dwellings and any new housing is within our adopted size thresholds. Policies DMH2 and DMH3 set out occupancy restrictions for first, second and subsequent occupants of affordable housing. Policy DMH11 says that in all cases involving the provision of affordable housing occupancy will be restricted by a planning obligation (Section 106 agreement).
28. Policies DMT3 and DMT8 require safe access and adequate off-street parking as a pre-requisite for all development within the National Park.
29. Policies DMU1 and DMU2 are relevant for new infrastructure and require any new services to be placed underground.

Assessment

Principle

30. The Lodge is a former dwelling and annex (Use Class C3) which has been converted to a care home (Use Class C2) and later substantially extended to allow for a maximum occupancy of 10 persons in care within the main building and annex.
31. This application proposes the erection of 3 residential units to the rear of the existing building. Each unit would provide 3 bedrooms over two floors along with kitchen, living space and bathrooms. Each unit would provide accommodation for two occupants along with a carer as required.
32. Each unit would therefore be self-contained and of a substantial size (approximately 120 square meter floor space). We therefore consider as a matter of fact and degree that each unit would be a dwelling occupied as part of the wider site rather than an extension to the existing care home.
33. The site is located in open countryside outside a named settlement where we only allow new housing where it would re-use existing buildings. Our policies only allow new housing to meet eligible local needs for affordable housing or residential institutions in sustainable locations within settlements named in policy DS1.
34. Therefore, in principle our policies do not support the erection of new dwellings on the site even if occupancy was to be restricted to local need in relation to the existing care home. The application is therefore contrary to Core Strategy policies DS1 and HC1 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Design and landscape impact

35. We do have concerns about the design, scale and impact of the proposed development.
36. The proposed residential units would be three substantial buildings sited to the rear of the existing building. Two of the units would be connected by a single storey conservatory but in wider views the units would appear as three detached dwellings.
37. The scale of the units would be substantial and much larger in scale and number than would be expected for ancillary outbuildings to the rear of the property. The scale of the development would be apparent from the road and in the wider landscape where the buildings would appear as three detached dwellings positioned to the rear of the Lodge.

38. The units have a standardised design based upon the existing annex, which is a converted former garage. Each unit therefore would appear as a single storey building with accommodation provided in the roof space. Each unit therefore would have a relatively wide gable and a high roof relative to the walls giving the appearance of domestic bungalows. The proposed uPVC windows and doors would add to the overly suburban appearance of the development.
39. Therefore, despite the proposed use of matching wall and roof materials, we consider that the design and scale of the impact is unacceptable and that the development would harm the character and appearance of the site and the wider landscape contrary to Core Strategy policies GSP3 and L1 and Development Management policies DMC1 and DMC3.
40. We acknowledge that the proposed design replicates the existing annex. However, this building is a former garage initially converted as an annex for the former dwelling use and now used as part of the care home. The proposed new units would replicate this design over a much larger and a more prominent part of the site.
41. The application does not include a scheme of landscaping and is not supported by a tree survey. It is therefore not clear how the levels of the development would be provided or how pathways would be created. The proposed units are sited close to trees and hedgerows on the northern boundary of the site and it is likely given the proximity that the development would affect these trees.
42. These trees and hedges form the northern boundary and make a positive contribution to the site and the wider landscape. Without a tree survey there is insufficient information for us to assess the impact of the development upon these trees contrary to Development Management policy DMC13.
43. The application form states that vehicle parking is not relevant to the application; however, we consider that the provision of the proposed residential units does potentially have implications for parking on the site. The plans do not show any additional parking to serve the proposed units but do show a parking area that has been created adjacent to the existing extension without the benefit of planning permission.
44. The plans do not show the number of existing or proposed parking spaces and therefore it is difficult to assess whether the existing parking areas would be sufficient to provide off-street parking spaces for the development or whether additional parking is required to meet the requirements of policy DMT8. The existing car park was full at the time of our site visit and therefore we consider it likely that the development would need to be served by additional off-street parking, which would have a further visual impact.

Sustainable building and climate change

45. The application is supported by a short statement, which says that there are various ways to reduce the carbon footprint of the building, and lists solar thermal and photovoltaic panels, fuel cells, biomass boiler, and combined heat and power. The application says that these technologies will be considered later and requests a planning condition is imposed to require this.
46. Policy CC1 and our Sustainable Building and Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) state all development must make the most efficient and sustainable use of land, buildings and natural resources, take account of the energy hierarchy and achieve the highest possible standards of carbon reductions and water efficiency.

47. As outlined above we have significant concerns about the principle of the development and that the proposal would not, in principle, be sustainable, contrary to our development strategy.
48. We also have concerns about the level of information provided in respects of policy CC1 and our SPD. The information provided gives a short list of technologies but does not explore the feasibility of any of the options. Crucially the submitted plans do not show any of the options incorporated into the design and the application makes no commitment to install any particular technology.
49. Furthermore, there is no information with the application to demonstrate how the development has been designed in accordance with the energy hierarchy by reducing the need for energy, using energy more efficiently, supplying energy more efficiently and finally by using low carbon and renewable energy technologies. There is no information on how building materials would be sourced to reduce carbon impact or how spoil would be disposed of. No water efficiency measures are proposed.
50. The application therefore does not demonstrate that the development would build in resilience or mitigate the causes of climate change contrary to Core Strategy policy CC1 and our SPD. It is not appropriate to impose a planning condition requiring details to be agreed because full compliance with our policies may require re-consideration of design or layout and these issues need to be fully explored and included in proposals.

Biodiversity

51. Due to the proximity of the proposed units to existing trees on site, it is likely that trees would need to be removed to facilitate the development. The removal of trees has the potential to affect local biodiversity, in particular bats, and birds. We require a protected species survey in this circumstance to identify potential impacts, mitigation and opportunities for the development to enhance biodiversity.
52. A protected species survey has not been submitted and therefore we are unable to understand the potential impact of the development upon local biodiversity and protected species and whether that impact could be mitigated. The application is therefore contrary to Core Strategy Policy L2 and Development Management Policies DMC11 and DMC12 because insufficient information has been submitted.

Amenity and highway safety

53. The application states that because of the physical limitations of the main building coupled with the special needs of residents that only a total of 6 people can be provided with care in the existing building (4 in the main building and 2 in the annex).
54. However, during the previous application for the two-storey extension (now completed) the same argument was made and that the extension would allow for 10 occupants. Combined the original building, annex and extensions provide a total of 12 bedrooms for occupants and carers. The proposed development would provide a further 9 bedrooms and space for 6 occupants. We therefore consider it likely that the development would result in an increase in the number of occupants and carers on site at any given time.
55. As stated above the proposal does not include any additional parking or an assessment of how the proposed number of parking spaces would meet the minimum requirements of the site. This is critical because parking along this section of Manchester Road would be unacceptable on highway safety grounds.

56. The development would be likely to generate additional vehicle movements by occupants, visitors and staff however, these would be retained within the site and utilising the existing access which is separate from the access that serves the neighbouring properties. We therefore consider that any noise and disturbance from additional activity would not harm the amenity of neighbouring properties.
57. The proposed units would be sited to the rear of the site and taking into account the orientation of the buildings and the distance from the neighbouring properties this would not result in any overlooking or loss of privacy to neighbouring properties. Any additional bins could be stored with the existing without harm to amenity.

Other issues

58. Concern has been raised about the potential light pollution from the development. As with many developments within the countryside, there is the potential for light pollution from the development causing a harmful impact upon tranquillity and dark skies, which is a valued characteristic of the National Park.
59. The proposed development could create additional light pollution on the site. Internal lighting would be seen within the context of the existing care home. Any impact from external lighting could be effectively mitigated by a scheme of low powered down lighting on sensors to reduce the amount of lighting required.
60. Concern has also been raised about the nature of the application and that applications have been made in stages for incremental development on the site rather than a single application. Ultimately, it is up to applicants to determine when to apply for development and we must determine the application on its own merits.
61. Finally, the manager of the existing care home has drawn our attention to a report by the Joint Committee on Human Rights on the detention of young people with learning disabilities and/or autism. We note the report, and recognise the importance of providing adequate community provision. We also recognise that the existing care home has achieved an outstanding rating for the fundamental standard of caring and that the operator of the care home has been highlighted as providing best practice.
62. We recognise the provision of this accommodation as a public benefit. However this benefit must be weighed against the impact of the development upon the National Park, the conservation of which must also be given great weight in the decision making process. The purposes for National Parks gives us a purpose to conserve and enhance the National Park which outweighs benefits to the social and economic wellbeing of communities. The potential impact of the development is substantial and we do not consider that the potential benefits of allowing the development would outweigh the harm that has been identified.

Conclusion

63. The proposed residential units are in principle contrary to our adopted development strategy and housing policies, which do not support the erection of new building housing in the countryside.
64. By virtue of their scale, form and design the proposed residential units would have an overtly suburban appearance and would harm the character and appearance of the existing building and the scenic beauty of the landscape.
65. Insufficient information has been provided to allow us to assess whether the development would be designed and built to mitigate the impacts of climate change, to conserve trees on site or local biodiversity.

66. We recognise the benefits of the accommodation and care provided on site to occupants and the wider community. However, these benefits are not considered to outweigh or override the conflict identified with our policies and in the absence of further material considerations it is therefore concluded that the proposed development is contrary to the development plan. The application is therefore recommended for refusal.

Human Rights

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

List of Background Papers (not previously published)

68. Nil

Report Author

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