

5. FULL APPLICATION – CONVERSION OF FARM BUILDINGS AND THE RE-BUILD OF A FORMER PORTION TO FORM HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION. UPPER OLDHAMS FARM, LONG RAKE, YOULGRAVE (NP/DDD/1020/1005, MN)

APPLICANT: MR S DICK

Summary

1. The proposed development seeks to convert a range of former agricultural buildings to holiday accommodation, including rebuilding of one building.
2. Core policy RT2 permits the conversion of buildings of historic or vernacular merit to holiday accommodation. Planning policy DMC10 permits the conversion of heritage assets to other uses.
3. It is concluded that the existing buildings have undergone such significant rebuilding and alteration that they retain little historic or vernacular merit, and as such no longer represent heritage assets. Therefore their conversion to holiday accommodation is contrary to policy in principle.
4. In other regards the development would broadly have acceptable planning impacts, subject to matters of detailed design being addressed and to details of the proposed ground source heating being agreed prior to determination.
5. However, the conversion of the buildings remains contrary to policy and would not result in any material planning benefits, other than those associated with the provision of holiday accommodation, which policy makes provision for in different circumstances.
6. Accordingly, the application is recommended for refusal.

Site and surroundings

7. Upper Oldham's Farm is located on Long Rake road, in open countryside approximately 1.5 miles south of Monyash village.
8. The property is a historic farmstead, and as such is recorded on the Derbyshire Historic Environment Record and the Peak District National Park Historic Buildings, Sites and Monuments Record.
9. The farmstead is of late 18th or 19th century date, and was originally of a small L-shaped plan with attached house with one side of the yard formed of agricultural buildings and additional detached elements to the main plan. The farmhouse is attached to the agricultural range, part of which has been converted in to additional living accommodation.
10. The main north-south agricultural range was extended to the south in the late 19th century, elongating the L-shaped range. In the early 20th century an east-west range added to create a U-shaped courtyard. This range has been almost entirely demolished, the north facing elevation wall surviving.
11. The site is outside of any designated conservation area.
12. The scheduled monuments of Arbor Low and Gib Hill are located approximately 150m southeast and 200m south of the site respectively.

13. The property has no immediate residential neighbours, but the adjacent farm buildings and farm business are in separate ownership.

Proposal

To convert a range of former agricultural buildings to holiday accommodation, including re-building one former building.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the application be REFUSED for the following reasons:

- **The buildings subject to the proposals have been so substantially altered and partially reconstructed that they are no longer buildings of historic or vernacular merit, and are concluded to no longer be heritage assets. As a result their conversion to holiday accommodation is contrary to policies RT2 and DMC10.**
- **The re-building of the building referenced as ‘Unit 6’ would amount to the construction of new build holiday accommodation, the provision of which is not supported by policy RT2.**

Key Issues

14. The main planning considerations relevant to this application are:

- Whether the buildings constitute heritage assets suitable for conversion to holiday accommodation under the provisions of adopted planning policy
- Whether the proposals would conserve the character and appearance of the buildings
- Whether the highway impacts of the development are acceptable

History

15. 1999 – Planning permission granted for conversion of outbuildings with extension to form additional living accommodation

Consultations

16. Highway Authority – Commented on the application as originally submitted, advising that the applicant should be demonstrating specified visibility splays and parking provision within the site. Further plans have subsequently been submitted that meet the specifications set out in the highway authority response.
17. Parish Council – Middleton and Smerrill Parish Council supports this application and in particular the rebuild of the ruin to re-create the historic C shape as a part of the accommodation. The courtyard created will greatly enhance the appearance of the property and reduce views to the modern farm buildings beyond. None of the buildings in this application would have a practical use in modern farming methods and to be merely reconstructed for agricultural purposes would be of no purpose. This design and use will greatly enhance and improve the site. Council, like the PDNPA, wishes to encourage local enterprise to keep our parishioners livelihoods flourishing and provide sustainable tourism.

18. PDNPA – Archaeology: Due to the importance of the Archaeologist's views on this case, and because their response concisely addresses the matters of the buildings heritage interest, they are reproduced here in full.

The Archaeologist advises that they have reviewed the Historic Buildings Appraisal and various other sources of information available to the Authority and I have a number of concerns about the application:

- 1) *That the buildings that are the subject of this application have been so extensively altered and rebuilt that they are of very little heritage value.*
- *Upper Oldham's Farm is a historic farmstead, and as such is recorded on the Derbyshire Historic*
 - *Environment Record and the Peak District National Park Historic Buildings, Sites and Monuments Record. The farmstead is of late 18th or 19th century date, and was originally of a small L-shaped plan with attached house with one side of the yard formed of agricultural buildings and additional detached elements to the main plan. The farmhouse is attached to the agricultural range. The main north-south agricultural range was extended to the south in the late 19th century, elongating the L-shaped range. In the early 20th century an east-west range added to create a U-shaped courtyard. This range has been almost entirely demolished, the north facing elevation wall surviving.*
 - *The buildings that are the subject of this application are the largely demolished 20th century east-west range and southern part of the north-south range.*
 - *The north-south range has been extensively internally and externally rebuilt, to the extent to which that is almost an entirely new building on the footprint of a building that formed part of a historic farmstead*
 - *Internally all original fixture, fittings, walls and floors have been lost.*
 - *The roof is entirely modern.*
 - *Externally, only very few unaltered historic apertures remain, and new apertures have been recently inserted, and the form of the building has been altered to raise the eaves and alter the roofline at the southern end of the range to form to domestic style gables.*
 - *Before modern unsympathetic alteration this was likely a historic farmstead and building range of medium to high historic and architectural interest, but modern alterations have compromised the significance of the buildings.*
 - *The buildings are now difficult to read with respect to their historic function, and have low historic interest. The agricultural character has been undermined by the insertion of the gables, the alternation of the form and scale of historic openings and the insertion of entirely modern openings.*
 - *Any value that survives relates to a degree of surviving agricultural character (you can still tell these building started as traditional farm building), the historic planform of the farmstead, and its place in and relationship to the historic landscape, its fieldscape etc.*
- 2) *The proposed development will further compromise and dilute the little value that remains.*
- *The proposed development will not harm any historic fabric, features or the historic interest of the building because there is none left to harm.*
 - *The proposed development will further dilute and undermine the surviving agricultural character of the farmstead (number and size of rooflights, some domestic style windows etc).*

Given how little interest remains, and as the east-west range is 20th century and not the original farmstead form, I see little value in it being rebuilt, especially as the development does not propose reinstatement in accordance with the evidence available for the form of the building. It's rebuilding would a lost element of the farmyard plan, but one that relates to the 20th century development of the farmstead and not the original historic L-shaped plan layout. From the limited information available I would attach more significance to the original planform where buildings still occupy the footprint, than the 20th century alteration to the planform where the building has been lost.

A plant room is proposed as an extension to the west elevation of the north-south range. This is shown on the existing plans as a log store, but in the historic buildings appraisal is marked as 'non-longer extant'. This suggests that this structure is a recent addition to the building. This is an inappropriate modern addition, contrary to conversion guidance, and there was not an outshot here historically.

Being so close to Arbor Low and Gibb Hill scheduled monuments, the site does have archaeological interest, and I support the recommendation that any groundworks would need to be the subject of a programme of archaeological monitoring, secured by a condition.

However, with the core significance and interest of the site being so compromised and their being so little value left in these buildings, I question whether these buildings retain enough interest to be worthy of conversion under DMC10, at least in their current form.

Representations

None received at time of writing.

Main policies

19. Relevant Core Strategy policies: GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, DS1, L2, L3, RT2, CC1, CC2
20. Relevant Development Management Plan policies: DMC3, DMC5, DMC10
21. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance
22. In the National Park the Local Plan comprises the Authority's Core Strategy 2011 and the Development Management Policies 2019. Policies in the Local 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 Local Plan and government guidance in the NPPF with regard to the issues that are raised.
23. 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.
24. Part 16 of the NPPF deals with conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Paragraph 189 states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting, and that the level of detail should be proportionate

to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. It notes that as a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. It also states that where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

25. Paragraph 190 requires local planning authorities to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. It states that authorities should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.
26. Paragraph 192 states that local planning authorities should take account of: a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
27. Paragraph 197 advises that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

28. Development Plan

29. 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.
30. Core Strategy policy DS1 outlines the Authority's Development Strategy, and in principle permits the conversion of buildings to provide visitor accommodation.

31. Core Strategy policy RT2 says that proposals for hotels, bed and breakfast and self-catering accommodation must conform to the following principles:
- 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.
 - Appropriate minor developments that extend or make quality improvements to existing holiday accommodation will be permitted.
 - New build holiday accommodation will not be permitted, except for a new hotel in Bakewell.
32. Core Strategy policy CC1 requires development to make the most efficient and sustainable use of land and resources, to take account of the energy hierarchy, to achieve the highest standards of carbon reduction and water efficiency, and to be directed away from flood risk areas.
33. Core Strategy policy L2 states that development must conserve and enhance any sites.
34. 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.
35. 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.
36. 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.
37. 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.
38. The supporting text also discusses the conversion of buildings, other than heritage assets, advising that these buildings will rarely be worthy of conversion to higher intensity uses and as such will not normally be permitted.

39. 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

40. Principle of development – heritage significance of the buildings
41. Core Strategy policy RT2 supports the change of use of a traditional buildings of historic or vernacular merit to serviced or self-catering holiday accommodation, except where it would create unacceptable landscape impact in open countryside.
42. This position is supported by policy DMC10, which addresses conversion of heritage assets. It permits the conversion of such buildings 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.
43. The supporting text to DMC10 makes clear that buildings that are of lower quality than heritage assets will usually only be granted permission for conversion to lower-intensity uses. This is to prioritise and encourage the conversion and conservation of those buildings that make a more significant contribution the heritage of the National Park.
44. The heritage significance of the barns is discussed below.
45. Units 1 to 5
46. The application has been accompanied by an Historic Building Appraisal. This identifies the farmstead as a whole as a non-designated heritage asset, and describes the buildings subject of the application as “still extant” whilst noting that “the range has been renovated resulting in a degree of loss to its historic fabric”.
47. It advises that the exterior walling “is still intact”, apart from that of Unit 6, of which it recognises only a length of the north elevation wall containing a window and doorway survives.
48. Whilst it cannot be disputed that exterior walls are currently “intact”, prefacing this with the adverb “still” serves to confuse the Appraisals conclusions in relation to the age of these external walls. The Appraisal does not identify them as historic, but equally does not identify them as modern, instead only places emphasis only on their significance in maintaining the buildings original plan form.
49. It is clear from aerial imagery from 2012 and from historic photographs from the 1990s that much of the external walling has been rebuilt in the last 20 years. This also appears evident around the outside of the building, where pointing and coursing can be seen to alter between historic and more recently rebuilt sections of the barn.
50. Only very few unaltered historic apertures remain, and new apertures have also been recently inserted.
51. Further, east and west facing gables have been built in to the eaves of the building in recent years; these were not present on the barn prior to its reconstruction.
52. In addition, all roofs, including timbers, are entirely modern. They have also been raised around the buildings.

53. Internally, nothing historic remains in the buildings subject to the proposals. New blockwork walls have been constructed, both subdividing the internal space and as an inner skin to outer walls, and new timber floors have been introduced.
54. On the basis of this there can be concluded to be only a limited amount of the original buildings remaining, and the Authority's Archaeologist concludes that they are now difficult to read with respect to their historic function, and that their agricultural character has been undermined by the insertion of the gables, the alternation of the form and scale of historic openings, the insertion of entirely modern openings, and loss of all internal historic features.
55. On this basis we cannot agree with the conclusions of the appraisal, which finds that the buildings are of historical significance.
56. The Appraisal places weight on the value of the buildings in the context of maintaining historic plan form and the relationship of the farmstead to the historic landscape, and the Authority's Archaeologist considers that this is where any limited remaining interest may lie. However, the same could be said of any stone buildings occupying the same footprint; that does not make the buildings themselves heritage assets of historic or vernacular merit that are suitable for conversion under policies RT2 or DMC10.

57. Unit 6

58. The Appraisal states that rebuilding Unit 6, of which just the front wall remains, would ensure survival of the remaining elements of the former cowhouse and return the farmstead to its earlier U-shaped plan. The Authority's Archaeologist advises that this former east-west range is 20th century and not part of the original farmstead form. They see no heritage value in rebuilding it, given that the development does not propose reinstatement in accordance with the evidence available for the form of the building.
59. Given how little remains of Unit 6, it is concluded that the proposals would amount to new build holiday accommodation in this regard, which is not supported by planning policy.
60. Given this, and because the Authority's Archaeologist sees no overriding heritage benefits to allowing its rebuilding that could be weighed against that policy conflict, the rebuilding of this building for holiday accommodation cannot be supported in principle.

61. Heritage significance conclusions

62. In conclusion, the buildings are so altered as to no longer represent heritage assets, with historic and vernacular interest having been so eroded that their conversion to holiday accommodation is contrary to policies RT2 and DMC10.
63. In their consultation response, the Authority's Archaeologist concludes that they question if the buildings "retain enough interest to be worthy of conversion under DMC10, *at least in their current form*" [emphasis added]. Changing the form of the proposed conversion (such as omitting the gables or changing openings) may improve its agricultural character, but it would not alter the fact that the buildings have such diminished historic interest as to no longer represent heritage assets.
64. It is therefore concluded that the scheme cannot be amended in such a manner that it could be supported in principle.

65. Impacts of the proposed works on the significance, character and appearance of the buildings

66. The Authority's Archaeologist advises that the proposed development will not harm any historic fabric, features or the historic interest of the building as there is little left to harm.
67. They do advise however that the proposed rooflights and some new windows would further dilute and undermine the surviving agricultural character of the farmstead.
68. We agree with these conclusions. The buildings have already been altered in such a manner that would appear to have prepared them for residential conversion; as a result, very few changes (aside from the proposed rebuilding of Unit 6) are now required or proposed.
69. The exception is the proposed addition of a rear lean-to to accommodate a plant room. Due to rising ground behind the building this would not be apparent in wider views of the site, but would still be at odds with the general principle of converting buildings within their existing shell. However, given some evidence for an earlier structure and that the space is proposed to support the provision of climate change mitigation and water efficiency, it may have been possible to support it on balance, if the scheme had been otherwise found to be acceptable and was required to conserve a heritage asset.
70. Matters of detail such as reducing the amount of rooflights and changing window fenestration could be addressed by condition, if permission was to be granted.
71. Overall, there would be no objections to the proposed design subject to conditions, if permission was to be granted.
72. Highway impacts
73. The Highway Authority advised that as submitted the application failed to include details to demonstrate that sufficient exist visibility was available at the site access. These have since been provided and meet the visibility requirements in each direction that were requested by the Highway Authority.
74. The Highway Authority also request that parking within the site is demonstrated to be sufficient with a proposed layout provided – whilst recognising that there appears to be sufficient space for parking and turning within the site. These details have since been submitted, illustrating sufficient parking space is available.
75. Overall, subject to the conditions to secure parking and access, the development would conserve highway safety and provide sufficient parking levels in accordance with policy DMT8.
76. Ecological impacts
77. A protected species has not been submitted. Given the extensive recent renovation of the buildings, including their entire re-roofing, one is not required to accord with local validation criteria and the development would not adversely impact upon protected species, according with policy L2.
78. Sustainable building and climate change
79. In addition to typical walling, roofing, and window insulation measures the application also proposes to harness rainwater recycling for flush toilets, installing a water meter, installing a wood burner, and installing a ground source heat pump. Taken collectively these measures would help minimise carbon emissions and reduce water usage, whilst conserving the characteristics of the area, according with policies CC1 and CC2.

80. However, details of the location of the heat pump pipe run have not been provided, and given the archaeological sensitivity of the area this part of the proposal would require archaeological assessment prior to approval being granted, to minimise the risk of harm arising and to ensure that any identified harm is properly mitigated. This assessment has not been requested given the more fundamental concerns arising from the proposals, but would be required prior to determination if a decision to approve the proposals was otherwise reached.

81. Amenity impacts

82. Due to the physical relationship between the development and house of Upper Oldhams it would be necessary to secure the holiday lets within the same planning unit as the house by condition, if permission was granted. This would prevent a loss of privacy and potential conflicts between use of the courtyard area for parking.

83. No other neighbours would be affected and the development complies with policy DMC3 in so far as it relates to amenity.

Conclusion

84. Core policy RT2 permits the conversion of buildings of historic or vernacular merit to holiday accommodation. Planning policy DMC10 permits the conversion of heritage assets to other uses.

85. It is concluded that the existing buildings have undergone such significant rebuilding and alteration that they retain little historic or vernacular merit, and no longer represent heritage assets. Therefore their conversion to holiday accommodation is contrary to policy in principle.

86. In other regards the development would broadly have acceptable planning impacts, subject to matters of detailed design being addressed and to details of the proposed ground source heating being agreed prior to determination.

87. However, the conversion of buildings that do not meet the requirements of policies RT2 or DMC10 to holiday accommodation remains unacceptable in principle. Cumulatively such decisions would undermine the purposes of adopted policy to promote the appropriate re-use and conservation of heritage assets, by reducing demand for such conversions through the over supply of holiday accommodation in the National Park. This over-provision would also be to the detriment of the social and economic wellbeing of local communities in terms of impacts on existing accommodation businesses and vacant premises within settlements.

88. Accordingly, the application is recommended for refusal.

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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