

**8. FULL APPLICATION - PROPOSED AGRICULTURAL BUILDING TO HOUSE AND FEED LIVESTOCK AND STORE FODDER – SOUTH VIEW FARM, WASHHOUSE BOTTOM, LITTLE HUCKLOW (NP/DDD/0821/0916 SPW)**

**APPLICANT: MR R ELLIOTT**

**Summary**

1. The application seeks planning permission for a new agricultural building in association with the established agricultural operations at South View Farm.
2. The proposal is considered to pose significant harm to the landscape due to its siting in a field in open countryside which would disrupt the building line leading north from Little Hucklow harming the established form and character of the settlement. The application is recommended for refusal.
3. A proposal for the same basic scheme was refused by Planning Committee in June 2021. The only material difference provided by this application is the inclusion of a dry stone wall around the perimeter of the building, incorporating a gate to the adjacent fields.

**Site and Surroundings**

4. South View Farm stands on the east side of Washhouse Bottom to the north side of Little Hucklow, approximately 50m north of the junction with Forest Lane. Little Hucklow is not a named settlement under DS1. The farmstead does not lie within the designated conservation area, is not listed, nor are there any listed buildings in the vicinity. A public right of way runs across the southern boundary of the farmstead at a distance of 30m.
5. The built environment provides a clear building/development line to the properties along Washhouse Lane, defined by a limestone drystone wall. The site for the new building is prominent in the landscape and open to public view.
6. The farm holding extends to 322 acres of land, with stock levels of approximately 210 beef cattle and a flock of 800 sheep with followers. The farmstead comprises a range of agricultural buildings with the house to the north.
7. The nearest neighbouring properties to the applications site are Hill Top Farm and South View Cottage approximately 80m south of the application site.

**Proposal**

8. The application seeks planning permission for the erection of a portal frame agricultural building to the east side of the existing building group. The block plan has been amended since submission and shows the building would be enclosed by a new drystone wall and with new tree planting arranged in three blocks (12 trees total).
9. The building is approximately 22.9m x 18.3m. Its eaves height is 4m and its ridge height would be just over 6.4m. The pitch of the roof is approximately 15 degrees. The building would have a floor area of approximately 418m<sup>2</sup>.
10. The building is dug into the topography via a cut and fill, which cuts into the land by just under 1m and builds up the land level by approximately just under 1m, this is shown on the section drawings.

11. The building is finished in a dark blue sheets for its roof and walls, with concrete panels below with the exception of the east elevation which has its walls finished in Yorkshire boarding, with concrete panels below.
12. The existing limestone drystone wall field boundary would be removed.
13. A tree survey has been submitted for the two existing retained trees adjacent the site and within the current boundary wall.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**That the application be REFUSED for the following reasons:**

1. **The siting of the proposed building will harm the valued characteristics of the area, the National Parks Landscape and the setting of the Conservation Area. The proposal is therefore contrary to Core Strategy policies GSP1, GSP3, L1, L3 and Development Management Policies DMC3, DMC5, DMC8, DME1, the SPG Agricultural Developments in the Peak District National Park and the NPPF which explains that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, which have the highest status of protection on relation to landscape and scenic beauty.**
2. **Insufficient information has been submitted regarding the established mature tree situated north of the agricultural buildings. This information is required by policy DMC13 to assess the potential for harm and extent of tree protection required.**

**Key Issues**

14. The impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the site and its wider landscape setting.
15. Whether the proposal would harm the amenities of nearby properties.
16. Impact on trees

**History**

17. There is an extensive history of applications for agricultural development at South View Farm, the most relevant being:
18. 2021- Application NP/DDD/0321/0260 for an agricultural building was refused due to its impact on the landscape and setting of the Conservation area aswell as there being insufficient information to properly understand the impact on trees.

**Consultations**

19. Derbyshire County Council Highway Authority – No objections.
20. Derbyshire District Council – No response.

21. Great Hucklow, Grindlow, Windmill, Little Hucklow and Coplowdale Parish Council - Support the proposal subject to appropriate screening.

22. PDNPA Archaeology – No objection

23. PDNPA Landscape Architects – On the submitted proposal the officer commented as follows; ‘Needs a tree report, the landscape character type is ‘Limestone Hills and Slopes’. Key characteristics for this area include a regular pattern of medium to large walled fields and occasional groups and belts of trees. In terms of enclosure, the straight boundaries and regular enclosure pattern reflect the late enclosure of this landscape from common and waste in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The application scheme breaks the discrete and strong building line and intrudes into the open area to the north of the village. This would be a significant adverse intrusion. The Landscape proposals (a new dry stone wall) are absolutely insufficient to demonstrate compliance with Policy L1 ‘Development must conserve and enhance valued landscape character, as identified in the Landscape Strategy and Action Plan, and other valued characteristics

The building would form a prominent new view element (e.g. from Viewpoints 2, 3 and 4) and is not adequately screened / accommodated into the landscape.’

The Landscape Officer went on to comment that in the event that the scheme gains approval a tree survey and protection plan would be required along with an adequate landscaping scheme.

*Officer Note: We await updated comment on the amended block plan the agent has submitted in response to the above comments.*

24. PDNPA Tree Officer – Response awaited on submitted tree survey.

### **Representations**

25. During the consultation period, the Authority did not receive any representations regarding the proposed development.

### **Main Policies**

26. Relevant Core Strategy policies: GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, GSP4, DS1, L1, L2, L3, CC1.

27. Relevant Local Plan policies: DM1, DMC1, DMC3, DMC5, DMC8, DMC11, DMC13, DME1

### **National Planning Policy Framework**

28. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has been revised (2021). 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 176 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.

### **Peak District National Park Core Strategy**

29. Policy GSP1 sets out the broad strategy for achieving the National Park’s objectives having regard to the Sandford Principle, (that is, where there are conflicting desired

outcomes in achieving national park purposes, greater priority must be given to the conservation of the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area, even at the cost of socio-economic benefits. GPS1 also sets out the need for sustainable development and to avoid major development unless it is essential, and the need to mitigate localised harm where essential major development is allowed.

30. GSP2 adds that proposals will need to demonstrate that they offer significant overall benefit to the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area. Where appropriate, landscaping and planting schemes will be sought. Opportunities will be taken to enhance the National Park by the treatment or removal of undesirable features or buildings.
31. Policy GSP3 sets out 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 appropriate to the character and appearance of the National Park, design in accordance with the National Park Authority Design Guide and impact on living conditions of communities.
32. Policy GSP4 allows for the use of planning conditions as necessary.
33. Policy DS1 sets out what types of development are acceptable in principle within the National Park. This includes agricultural development.
34. Policy L1 identifies that development must conserve and enhance valued landscape character and valued characteristics, and other than in exceptional circumstances, proposals in the Natural Zone will not be permitted.
35. Policy L3 specifies that development must conserve and where appropriate enhance or reveal the significance of archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic assets and their settings.
36. Policy CC1 states that all development must make the most efficient and sustainable use of land, buildings and natural resources to achieve the highest possible standards of carbon reductions.

#### Peak District National Park Development Management Plan

37. Policy DM1 outlines that development proposals will be assessed in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework and the Peak Districts purposes to conserve the valued characteristics of the National Park. Applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan will be approved without unnecessary delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
38. The pre text to DMC1 at para 3.10 explains that A 'Landscape First' approach means using the Landscape Strategy and Action Plan (Core Strategy policy L1) to assess whether the character and quality of the landscape will be conserved and enhanced by a development. Alternative approaches should be considered if development would not conserve the character and quality of the landscape.
39. Policy DMC1 requires that any proposals must take into account the respective landscape strategy and action plans for each character area in the Peak District, and requires that where buildings are no longer needed or being used for the purposes which it was permitted and their continued presence may be harmful then these shall be removed and planning conditions or legal agreements can be used to achieve this.

40. Development management policy DMC3 relates to siting, design, layout and landscaping. It requires that where development is acceptable in principle it will be permitted provided that its detailed treatments are of a high standard that respects, protects and where possible enhances the natural beauty, quality and visual amenity of the landscape, including wildlife and cultural heritage that contribute to the distinctive sense of place. Amongst other things particular attention is paid to siting, scale, form, mass, levels, height and orientation in relation to existing buildings, settlement form and character including impact on open spaces, landscape features and the wider landscape setting which contribute to the valued character and appearance of the area and the degree to which buildings and their design, details, materials and finishes reflect or compliment the style and traditions of the locality as well as other valued characteristics of the area such as the character of the historic landscape and varied biodiversity assets.
41. As the farm group abuts and is within the setting of the Little Hucklow Conservation Area boundary policy DMC8 is relevant. Policy DMC8 requires that development in Conservation Areas must preserve and enhance the Conservation Area setting, taking account of the effects of development to its setting and character, including views into and out of the conservation area.
42. Policy DMC11 outlines that proposals should aim to achieve net gains to biodiversity or geodiversity as a result of development. In considering whether a proposal conserves and enhances sites, features or species of wildlife, geological or geomorphological importance all reasonable measures must be taken to avoid net loss by demonstrating enhancement, mitigation or compensation measures.
43. Policy DMC13 requires that applications should provide sufficient information to enable the impact on trees and other landscape features to be properly considered. Trees should be protected during the course of development.
44. Policy DME1 states that new agricultural buildings will be permitted provided that the scale proposed is functionally required for the purpose intended. It goes on to state that new agricultural buildings shall (i) be located close to the farmstead or main group of buildings and relate well to existing buildings, trees, walls and other landscape features (ii) not be in isolated locations requiring obtrusive access tracks or services (iii) respect the design, scale, mass and colouring of existing buildings (iv) avoid adverse effects on the areas valued characteristics, including important local views, making use of the least obtrusive or otherwise damaging possible location and (v) avoid harm to the setting, fabric and integrity of the Natural Zone.

#### Supplementary Planning Guidance

45. The PDNPA has a Supplementary Planning Document for agricultural buildings which sets out siting and design recommendations for such development.

#### **Assessment**

##### Principle of the Development

46. Policy DS1 and DME1 together allows for new agricultural buildings where it is demonstrated that there is a functional need, provided the design and impact to the wider setting is considered acceptable. As this site would also affect the setting of the conservation area, development which harmed its setting or the significance of the conservation area would not be permitted.

47. The application is supported by a statement which indicates that the building will be used to house and feed cattle and to house, feed and lamb sheep, these will be loose housed on a solid floor. The building would also be used as a livestock handling area and to store bales of hay and straw. Currently, the farm has approximately 210 beef cattle and 800 sheep plus followers. The applicant farms 322 acres.
48. The planning statement explains that the need for the building is because there is not sufficient room in the existing buildings to house the increasing stock levels and to store the fodder and implements required to manage to holding. The general need for a new agricultural building is accepted.

#### Landscape Impact

49. The field in which the building will be sited is currently an undeveloped field with a sloping gradient that descends to the east. The field is bound by limestone drystone walls and there are sparse clusters of trees amongst the landscape. The site exhibits the key characteristics of the landscape character type. Notably as explained by our Landscape Architects the regular pattern of medium to large walled fields and occasional groups and belts of trees. In terms of enclosure, the straight boundaries and regular enclosure pattern reflect the late enclosure of this landscape from common and waste in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.
50. All of the properties on Washhouse Bottom on the stretch north of Little Hucklow Village do not have development beyond their established eastern boundary, with any fields adjoining remaining undeveloped. This creates a hard building line east of the properties on Washhouse Bottom which are defined by a drystone boundary wall. A valued characteristic of the existing settlement form and character.
51. Views of the hard boundary and the adjoining open fields are prominent on the landscape from the south at Little Hucklow and to the north and east. As such it is felt that these views of the landscape are important to the Conservation Area setting and landscape character type and the settlements form and character.
52. The amended block plan now shows additional planting in the form of 12 trees arranged in three groups alongside the replacement drystone wall shown in the submission to bound the extended yard and building. Whilst the replacement wall will go a little way towards mitigating the loss of the historic position of the wall and over time the proposed trees would break up the outline of the building, these measures cannot overcome that the building and newly positioned wall will step out eastwards beyond the existing building line. This would harm the established landscape character type and disrupt the established hard building/development line adversely affecting the settlements form and character, in a location which is prominent and open to public view from its surroundings. Our Landscape Architects have confirmed that the building would be a significant adverse intrusion.
53. It is considered that this harm to the valued characteristics of the area and identified landscape character type and setting of the Conservation Area cannot be overcome by soft landscaping commitments due to the prominent position that the building will maintain because it juts out eastwards from the established building line. For these reasons the chosen location for this building would pose harm to the landscape and is therefore contrary to policies GSP1, GSP3, L1, L3 and Development Management Policies DMC3, DMC5, DMC8, DME1 and the SPG Agricultural Developments in the Peak District National Park. And the NPPF.

54. Policy DMC1 has a requirement that these type of buildings are removed when then are no longer required for the purposes of agriculture, and such a planning condition would be required here. However this in itself would not mitigate the adverse impact of the building during its likely very long lifetime.
55. At the last committee in June 2021 members asked that an alternative location on the other side of Washhouse Lane be considered. This is already in use as a storage area and would result in a lower landscape impact. Supplementary Planning Guidance highlights how opportunities can be taken to utilise farm groups, sloping ground and existing walls to help integrate new buildings into the landscape. Unfortunately this guidance has not been followed and the suggested alternative has not been taken up.

#### Design

56. PDNPA planning policy requires great care to be paid to the location, massing, size and colour of agricultural buildings due to their prominence in the landscape. The building is proposed to be a steel portal framed, with pitched roof, finished in a dark blue sheet, concrete panels at it base and on the eastern elevation Yorkshire boarding. This is typical of agricultural buildings in the National Park and the established buildings at South View Farm.
57. The building is proposed to be approximately 22.9m x 18.3m. Overall the design is in conformity with PDNPA guidance provided that the concrete base is rendered with a limestone dash.
58. The building is quite tall with 4m eaves height and 6.4m ridge that will exacerbate the impact but the issue with design is its location and the aforementioned harm it will cause because it will adversely affect the settlement form by stepping out beyond the existing building/development line and this is in a very prominent location which is open to public view.

#### Environmental Impacts

59. A mature tree is situated north of the existing range of agricultural buildings. The canopy of the tree projects over the walled off area that would be created which infers that the roots will have a similar span. Damage could potentially be incurred to the roots during the construction period yet no tree survey or protection plan has been submitted with the application. The previous application included a reason for refusal as no tree survey had been submitted, this has not been adequately addressed in this resubmission and remains a reason for refusal as the proposal is contrary to DMC13 as the potential impact on the tree cannot be fully understood without a tree survey.

#### Heritage Impacts

60. The landscape harm identified above is also harm to the setting of the conservation area in particular the loss of the existing strong building line will harm the setting of the Conservation Area adversely affecting views into and out of it and therefore also its significance. The proposed loss of the existing limestone drystone wall is also unfortunate. As noted above the proposal is contrary to the policies of the development plan which relate to conservation and enhancement of heritage assets including Core Strategy policy L3 and development management policies DMC5 and DMC8.

#### Amenity Impacts

61. There are no amenity concerns in regards to the proposed development.

### Highways Impacts

62. There are no highways concerns in regards to the proposed development as the building will be used for agricultural purposes. This use is already established at this site

### Conclusion

63. Whilst the principle of the development is acceptable which is to provide for expanded agricultural operations at South View Farm there is an adverse impact on the valued characteristics of the site and National Park landscape and setting of the conservation area due to the siting of the building. The need for the building does not outweigh the harm posed to the National Park landscape and setting of the conservation area. Other than the inclusion of wall and tree planting on the amended block plan the landscape impacts and reasons for refusal by committee in June 2021 remain the same. As such the application is therefore again recommended for refusal.

### 64. Human Rights

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

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

66. Nil

67. Report Author - Steven Wigglesworth