

6. FULL APPLICATION – ERECTION OF LOCAL NEEDS HOUSE WITH ASSOCIATED ACCESS AND LANDSCAPING AT RAKE END FARM, MONYASH (NP/DDD/0622/0751/ALN)

APPLICANTS: MR AND MRS HOTCHIN

Summary

1. The proposal is to erect a single, detached dwelling to meet an affordable local need.
2. The application demonstrates that the first occupants have a local qualification and that there is a proven need for the dwelling.
3. The dwelling would be of a size that reflects the needs of the named first occupants and its overall design is sensitive to the character of the area.
4. However, the chosen siting of the dwelling some 33m away from the nearest neighbouring building means that it would appear detached and isolated from the surrounding built development, and would detract from the agricultural character of this part of the Monyash Conservation Area.
5. The application is recommended for refusal.

Site and Surroundings

6. The application site is located on the south side of Rakes Road, close to its junction with The Rake. It consists of the northern portion of a larger field parcel. The site is currently in the ownership of Rake End Farm, which lies adjacent to the site to the west, and is used for agricultural purposes.
7. The site is bounded to the north by a drystone roadside boundary wall. Behind the wall is a 25m long belt of young mature trees.
8. The land is currently accessed off a driveway off Rakes Road, to the north of the site. It lies opposite the junction of Rakes Rd with Church Lane.
9. The nearest neighbouring properties are Bosign Cottage, Ivy Cottage and Manor Lodge, all located on the northern side of Rakes Rd, and Rakes End farmhouse, around 40m to the west.
10. The site is within the Monyash Conservation Area. There is a grade II listed building known as The Manor House, approximately 30m away to the south east, on the opposite side of Rakes Rd.

Proposal

11. Planning permission is sought for the erection of a single, 3 bedroom detached affordable dwelling to meet a local need. The dwelling would be first occupied by the applicants and their two children.
12. The dwelling would be sited with its principle elevation facing north east towards Rakes Rd. It would be set back around 3m from the roadside wall. It would have two storeys and a double fronted design. The internal floorspace would be 97 sqm.
13. The property would be constructed in natural limestone with gritstone dressings, a blue slate roof and timber casement windows and doors.

14. A new vehicular access would be created off Rakes Road to the immediate west of the dwelling, leading to a surfaced driveway that would provide manoeuvring and parking space for two vehicles. A patio and private garden area would be created to the rear (south).
15. The roadside tree belt on the northern boundary of the site would be felled and replaced by new native hedgerow and specimen tree planting.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the application be REFUSED for the following reasons:

16. By virtue of its siting, some 33m away from the nearest building to the north west, the dwelling would appear detached and isolated from the surrounding building development, and would detract from the character of the area and agricultural character of this part of the Monyash Conservation Area, contrary to Core Strategy policies GSP3, L1 and L3; Development Management policies DMC3, DMC5 and DMC8; advice in the Authority's Adopted Design Guide; and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Key Issues

- Whether there is justification for the proposed local need affordable houses and whether the proposed development is in accordance with policies HC1, DMH1 and DMH2.
- Siting and landscape impact.
- Design and Climate Change Mitigation
- Impact on Archaeology
- Highway Safety
- Impact on Residential Amenity
- Impact on Trees

History

17. There is no planning history directly related to the application site.

Consultations

18. **Highway Authority** – no response
19. **District Council** – no response
20. **Parish Council** – no objections
21. **Authority's Tree Conservation Officer** – no response
22. **Authority's Archaeologist** - *The walkover survey report appears to give a competent and detailed assessment of the lumps and bumps in the field and has related these to the history of the site and provided approximate dates for the origin of the various features.*
23. *There are the remains of ridge and furrow in the field, as the report identifies these are of high significance, but the upstanding physical remains are to the rear of the proposed development site and should not be impacted by the proposed development.*
24. *There are some stones that relate to a wall that ran along the line of one of the ridges*

when the ridge and furrow fields were subdivided into drystone wall strip fields. These stones start and are mainly to the rear of the development plot but a few extend into the proposed development plot. The wall is largely gone and the surviving remains are of low significance. As noted there could be the remains of ridge and furrow buried under the wall. The impact of the proposed development will be high but as the remains are of low significance the overall impact will be medium.

- 25. There are the remains of quarrying activities in the eastern half of the development plot and these probably date to the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As the plot was called barn Croft on the 1848 Tithe maps there could have been a Barn here at some time though maps back to 1776 do not show any barn. The later quarrying may well have removed the barn remains. The quarrying remains are of low significance while the barn, if it was even here is of unknown significance as we do not know if any remains survive.*
- 26. The walkover survey report suggests that archaeological monitoring should be undertaken on the line of the former fieldstone wall and potential buried ridge and the area of quarrying on the east side of the plot. These are reasonable recommendations that I agree with.*
- 27. As a non-designated heritage asset a balanced planning decision needs to be made that has regard to the significance of the heritage asset and the scale of any harm or loss to its significance (NPPF para.203). Should the planning balance be favourable then a condition to secure a scheme of archaeological monitoring is recommended.'*

Representations

28. Eight letters of support have been received on the following grounds:

- It is important to keep young families within their local communities.
- The applicant has strong connections to the village.
- Development will help to support local facilities such as the school, church and local business.
- The site is little used for farming.
- The design would complement the village.

Main Policies

29. Relevant Core Strategy policies: GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, DS1, HC1, L1, L2, CC1

30. Relevant Local Plan policies: DMC3, DMC4, DMC8, DMC11, DMC12, DMC13, DMH1, DMH2, DMH3, DMT3, DMT8.

National Planning Policy Framework

31. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27 March 2012 and replaced a significant proportion of central government planning policy with immediate effect. The Government's intention is that the document should be considered to be a material consideration and carry particular weight where a development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date. In the National Park the development plan comprises the East Midlands Regional Plan 2009, the Authority's Core Strategy 2011 and saved policies in the Peak District National Park Local Plan 2001. 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.
32. Paragraph 176 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.
33. Para 78 states that in rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. Local planning authorities should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs.
34. The NPPF defines rural exceptions site as small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection.

Core Strategy

35. Core Strategy 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.
36. Core Strategy policy GSP2 states, amongst other things, that when development is permitted, a design will be sought that respects the character of the area.
37. Core Strategy 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.

38. Policy HC1 says that exceptionally, new housing can be accepted where the proposals would address eligible local needs and would be for homes that remain affordable with occupation restricted to local people in perpetuity. The provisions of HC1 are supported by policy DMH1, DMH2 and DMH3 of the Development Management Policies, which gives more detailed criteria to assess applications for affordable housing to meet local need.
39. Core Strategy 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.
40. Policy L2 states the development must conserve and enhance any sites, features or species of biodiversity importance and where appropriate their setting. Other than in exceptional circumstances development will not be permitted where is likely to have an adverse impact on any site, features or species of biodiversity importance or their setting.
41. Core Strategy policy CC1 states that development must make the most efficient and sustainable use of land, buildings and natural resources.

Development Management Policies

42. DMH1 states that affordable housing will be permitted in or on the edge of named settlement, either by new build or by conversion provided that there is a proven need for the dwelling; and they are within set size thresholds.
43. DMH2 sets criteria for the first occupation of new affordable housing.
44. 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.
45. Policy DMC3. B sets out various aspects that particular attention will be paid to including: siting, scale, form, mass, levels, height and orientation, settlement form and character, landscape, details, materials and finishes landscaping, access, utilities and parking, amenity, accessibility and the principles embedded in the design related SPD and the technical guide.
46. Policy DMC4. A says that planning applications should provide sufficient information to allow proper consideration of the relationship between a proposed development and the settlement's historic pattern of development including the relationship of the settlement to local landscape character. The siting of the development should complement and not harm the character of these settlements.
47. DMC11 states that proposals should aim to achieve net biodiversity gains. 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.

48. DMC13 states that planning applications should provide sufficient information to enable impacts on trees, woodlands and other landscape features to be properly considered. Trees which contribute positively, either as individual specimens or as part of a wider group, to the visual amenity or biodiversity of the location will be protected. Other than in exceptional circumstances development involving loss of these features will not be permitted.
49. Policies DMT3 and DMT8 require development to be provided with adequate off-street parking and safe access.

Development Management Practice Note policy DMH1: New Affordable Housing (Feb 2022)

50. The practice note clarifies the circumstances in which flexibility in floorspace restrictions will be employed. This states at para 3.3 that: Families or people forming a household together of 3 or more can apply for homes up to 97 sqm.

Assessment

Justification for new affordable dwelling

Principle of Affordable Housing

51. Our policies do not allow new build housing in the National Park unless there are exceptional circumstances. One circumstance where housing can be permitted is under policy HC1. A, where development would meet eligible local need for affordable housing.
52. Although the site is located within an open field, we consider that is within the confines of the named settlement of Monyash, because there are further residential properties to the south east. Consequently in terms of spatial policy DS1, the development of an affordable house is acceptable in principle if there is proven need for the dwelling; the house accords with floorspace thresholds; the named first occupants satisfy the occupation criterion in accordance with policies DMH1 and DMH2; and provided the development conserves and enhances the valued character of the area.

Whether the applicants have an eligible local need

53. The applicant and their two children are the intended first occupants of the dwellings. It is stated that Mr and Mrs Hotchin currently live in Hartington with Mr Hotchin's parents and that Mr Hotchin has lived in Monyash for 12 years out of the last 20. The agent has provided further evidence of this by way of a signed statement from a local Parish Councillor, confirming the advised residence history. We are therefore satisfied that the named first occupants would meet the criteria of a returner under the first part of policy DMC2 (ii).
54. Policies DMH1 and DMH2 (ii) require the intended first occupants to be in need of affordable housing in all cases, including returners. Where dwellings are proposed to meet an individual's need our policies call for the same information required by Housing Authorities to assess claims of housing need (in this case Home-Options). Evidence of registration and eligibility with Home-Options has been submitted for the intended first occupants.
55. Consequently the application accords with policies DMH1 and DMH2 (ii).

Would the dwellings be affordable by size and type

56. The applicants live in a family of four people. The application proposes the erection of one three bedroom dwelling with a gross internal floor area of 97 sqm. This equates to a five-person dwelling as set out by policy DMH1. However the Authority has recently adopted a Development Management Practice note on policy DMH1 and this note specifies where some flexibility on the floorspace guidelines can be accepted. The note states that families, or people forming a household together of 3 or more, can apply for homes up to 97sqm. The applicants fall under that category and so the size of the dwelling as submitted is acceptable.

Siting and Landscape Impact

57. Development Management policy DMC3 makes it clear that siting in relation to existing buildings, settlement form and character must protect and where possible enhance the natural beauty and visual amenity of the area. The Adopted Design Guide also emphasises the importance of the siting of buildings in terms of giving a strong local identity to the National Park and that the rhythm and balance of the buildings should be maintained.
58. The application site is part of a larger open field parcel, and is sited adjacent to the farm buildings association with Rake End Farm. Consequently the site and the land surrounding it on the western side of Rakes Rd is agricultural in character. This is confirmed in the Conservation Area appraisal for Monyash, which states that this part of the village is dominated by the farm buildings and fields of Rake End Farm, Mount Pleasant and Manor House Farm, and so retains a strongly agricultural character. However the land on the north east side of Rakes Road is more residential in nature.
59. The proposed dwelling would be visible at close quarters from a number of public vantage points including Rakes Road and from the northern section of the Rake. It would also be visible when travelling south along the public right of way on Church Lane and from the Limestone Way as it meets Derby Lane to the south east. The dwelling would be sited some 33m away from the nearest neighbouring building, which is a traditional barn to the north west at Rake End Farm. As a result, when viewed from Rakes Road and Church Lane in particular, the dwelling would appear unrelated to other built development in the vicinity. It would sit on its own in the field and although the modern sheds at Rake End Farm would be visible at some distance behind it to the south west, the dwelling would nonetheless appear detached and isolated. There are no other residential properties in this part of the village that are physically separated from neighbouring properties to the extent of the proposed dwelling.
60. This poor relationship would be exacerbated by the proposed loss of the 25m long tree belt that sits along the front of the site. These are trees that were planted to screen the modern farm buildings at the farm and although a submitted tree survey demonstrates that they are generally in poor condition, their removal would make the large gap between the new dwelling and the surrounding buildings all the more obvious.
61. The development would cause harm to the significance of the Conservation Area because the character of the site would change from agricultural to residential. However, had the dwelling been well related to other built development, then the harm be minimised and it likely that it would be outweighed by the public benefits of providing affordable local needs housing. As it stands however, by virtue of its siting, the scheme would result in an unacceptable level of harm to the appearance of the Conservation Area.
62. We have negotiated with the agent to try to amend the scheme to relocate the dwelling further to the north west, closer to existing buildings. This would mean that alternative vehicular access arrangements would need to be made. Options for this include

sharing the existing driveway to the north with Rakes Farm (it is stated that the landowner does not wish to consider this), creating a new access to the east of the house, or creating a new access just to the east of the existing shared driveway. These options have not been explored in any detail however, because the applicants have requested that the application be determined as submitted.

63. As submitted therefore, the siting of the dwelling would cause harm to the valued character of the area and to the agricultural character of the Monyash Conservation Area, contrary to Core Strategy policies GSP3, L1 and L3 and Development Management policies DMC3 and DMC8.

Design and Climate Change Mitigation

64. The overall massing of the building respects traditional proportions and is acceptable. It would be constructed from natural stone and slate and windows and doors would be timber. Overall the design reflects advice in the Authority's Design Guide.
65. A Climate Change Mitigation report has been submitted which explains that a ground source heat pump would be installed to heat the property. The pipework would be laid in trenches in the field to the east of the proposed dwelling. Other measures include argon filled double glazing, high levels of insulation, low energy fixtures and fittings, locally sourced materials and low water use taps.
66. The measures are considered to be proportionate to the scale of the development and subject to a condition to ensure that the measures are implemented, then the proposals accord with Core Strategy policy CC1.

Impact on Archaeology

67. During the course of the application, at the request of the Authority's archaeologist, an archaeological walkover survey has been carried out and a report submitted. This identifies ridge and furrow earthworks of high significance in the southern part of the field, but they do not extend into the application site. The remains of a former pre-1776 boundary wall runs through the site from north to south. As the wall runs through the application site, the impacts would be high but the remains themselves are judged to be of low significance.
68. There also remain of quarrying activity in the eastern part of the application site (where the ground source heat pump trenches would be located) but again these are considered to be of low significance.
69. The Authority's archaeologist has reviewed these findings and agrees with its conclusions that a written scheme of investigation for a scheme of archaeological monitoring would be necessary and reasonable. Had the development been acceptable in all other respects, this would be required by condition.

Highway Safety

70. A new vehicular access would be created by breaking through the roadside boundary wall to the west of the proposed dwelling. 47 m x 45m visibility splays would be provided within the 30mph speed limit zone, which is in excess of the 43m standard. The roadside boundary wall would be set back slightly to achieve this, but as there is a grass verge in this location anyway, the set back would be minimal and would not cause harm to the character of the Conservation Area. In conclusion, a safe and suitable access would be provided to meet the needs of the development.

71. It is proposed to provide two off street parking spaces which meet the Authority's adopted parking standards for a three bedroomed dwelling.

Impact on Residential Amenity

72. The nearest neighbouring properties are Bosign Cottage, Ivy Cottage and Manor Lodge, all located on the northern side of Rakes Rd, and Rakes End farmhouse, around 40m to the west.
73. The separation distance to properties across the road would be around 20m, The standard separation distance between habitable room windows is 21m, but taking into account the presence of the intervening road, this minor shortfall is considered to be acceptable. Consequently our view is that the development would not cause harm to residential amenity.

Impact on Trees

74. During the course of the application a tree survey of the roadside tree belt has been submitted. The report identifies 17 trees in total, with four of those (poplar) being almost or wholly dead. The remaining trees are sycamore and ash and are classed as 'early mature' (25-30 years old). The majority of the trees are judged to be in poor condition due to damage caused by livestock, lack of thinning and poor pruning and crown lifting. The report recommends that the whole belt is removed and replaced with suitable species to create a more formal boundary treatment.
75. We have no reason to disagree with these conclusions. However, the loss of the tree belt would open up views of the modern farm buildings from Rakes Rd, as well as views of the proposed house itself, as discussed above. There is a belt of lleylandii trees further to the west which would still go some way to breaking up views of the farm buildings in the shorter term though, and had the siting of the dwelling been acceptable in the long term then the new planting scheme proposed for a replacement native hedge and specimen trees would provide some further screening.
76. One stand alone larch tree sits in the field outside of the application site edged red to the east. This has a significant pocket of decay (possibly from a lightning strike). The report states that due to the condition of the tree that it be removed to ground level with a view to replanting in the future. As this tree is outside of the application site and the applicant's control its management is not a matter for this application, and should be dealt with separately by the land owner.

Conclusion

77. The application demonstrates that the first occupants have a local qualification and that there is a proven need for dwelling in accordance with policies HC1, DMH1 and DMH2,
78. Furthermore the dwelling would be of a size that reflects the needs of the named first occupants and its overall design is sensitive to the character of the area.
79. However, the chosen siting of the dwelling some 33m away from the nearest neighbouring building means that it would appear detached and isolated from the surrounding built development, and would detract from the agricultural character of this part of the Monyash Conservation Area, contrary to policies GSP3, L1, L3, DMC3 and DMC8. The public benefits of the scheme do not outweigh the harm that has been identified, especially given that a more appropriate siting appears to be available.

Human Rights

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

List of Background Papers (not previously published)

81. Nil

Report Author and Job Title

82. Andrea Needham – Senior Planner - South