

9. FULL APPLICATION – ERECTION OF WOODEN FRAMED AND CLAD AGRICULTURAL BUILDING AT ROCKLANDS FARM, THE BENT, CURBAR (NP/DDD/0422/0528/WE)

APPLICANT: MR T COOPER

Summary

1. This application seeks consent to erect an open-faced timber framed agricultural building on an existing agricultural yard.
2. The application proposes additional planting on the southern boundary of the land parcel.
3. It is considered that the holding has a suitable agricultural justification for the building. It would not impact local amenity or the valued characteristics of the landscape. The application is therefore recommended for approval.

Site and Surroundings

4. The development site is located in the north of Curbar to the east of the The Bent. The land parcel this application relates to is to the rear of Rocklands Farm. Rocklands Farm comprises of a bungalow with large paved front garden, and a formal rear garden bound by hedgerows and fences. To the north of a bungalow and garden, there is an access track to the land to the rear of the property.
5. Immediately to the rear of Rocklands is a thin, irregular field parcel that raises to the east. Currently on site there is a stable block, farm equipment, and several sheep grazing the parcel. Immediately next to this parcel is a large horse-riding arena which is bound by leylandii trees on its northern and eastern boundaries. Beyond this, the holding opens out onto large field parcels bound by drystone walls. There is a traditional stone barn located 20 north of the manege. Across the site are a number of mobile chicken huts.
6. The development site is located approximately 650m west of Curbar Edge. The farm holding is not located in the Natural Zone; however, the land to the north and south of the farm is located within the designation.

Proposal

7. This application is seeking consent for the construction of an agricultural barn that would measure 13.92m in length, 5.10m in width, and 4m in height (3.18m to eaves).
8. The agricultural building would feature timber horizontal stock walling for the first 1.4m, with vertical timber space boarding to the eaves. The roof would feature standard profile steel sheeting in 'slate blue' BS 18-B-29. There would be 6 rooflights, 3 of each slope, close to the ridge.
9. This application includes a landscaping scheme that proposes additional hedgerow planting on the southern boundary of the land parcel. The landscaping scheme has been prepared to comply with Authority guidance on farmland hedgerow planting, and would incorporate Hawthorn, crab apple, dog rose, bird cherry and hazel.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the application be APPROVED subject to the following conditions:

1. **3-year implementation time limit**

2. **Adopted amended plans**
3. **The first season following construction of the approved agricultural building, the approved landscaping measures received by the Authority on 20 April 2022 shall be completed in accordance with dwg '14 Planting Location'.**
4. **No external lighting shall be installed at the premises unless in complete accordance with a scheme which shall first have been submitted to and approved in writing by the National Park Authority**
5. **Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 2015 the use of the building hereby approved shall be restricted to agriculture only (as defined in section 336 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) and for no other purpose.**
6. **When the building hereby permitted is no longer required for the purposes of agriculture on the holding it shall be dismantled, removed from the site and the site shall be restored to its original condition.**

Key Issues

1. Agricultural justification
2. Impact on valued characteristics of the landscape
3. Amenity

History

10. March 2018 – Erection of mobile timber hen-house on skids (NP/DDD/1217/1282) – Granted conditionally with conditions varied through appeal (APP/M9496/W/18/3200699)
11. February 2019 – Lawful Development Certificate for a proposed use for mobile poultry shelter refused.
12. May 2019 – Placement of a timber mobile poultry shelter approved at planning committee.

Consultations

13. Curbar Parish Council – No objection but raised concern over potential light pollution at night time.
14. Derbyshire County Council Highways Authority – No highway objection on the basis the building is used for agricultural purposes only, in support of existing farming activities carried out on surrounding controlled farmland.

Representations

15. 7 representations were received by 6 separate parties. 2 of the representations made general comments. The comments raised included:
 - Impact of external lighting on dark skies and amenity of nearby residents;
 - Impact of development on the landscape and scenic beauty of the National Park;
 - Concern over justification of the size of the development;
 - Concern over orientation;
 - Concern over adequacy of screening.
16. The 5 objection letters raised the following concerns:

- View from garden being obscured;
- Discharge of water;
- Orientation of the building and impact on residents of the Green and wider landscape;
- Suggestions of revised locations elsewhere on site;
- Concern over justification;
- Impact on the dark skies over Curbar.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

17. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was revised in 2021. 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 the National Park the development plan comprises the Authority's Core Strategy 2011 and the Development Management Policies 2019. 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 Government guidance in the NPPF.
18. 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.

Main Development Plan Policies

Core Strategy

19. GSP1, GSP2 - *Securing National Park Purposes and sustainable development & Enhancing the National Park*. These policies jointly seek to secure national park legal purposes and duties through the conversion and enhancement of the National Park's landscape and its natural and heritage assets.
20. GSP3 - *Development Management Principles*. Requires that particular attention is paid to the impact on the character and setting of buildings and that the design is in accord with the Authority's Design Guide and development is appropriate to the character and appearance of the National Park.
21. DS1 - *Development Strategy*. Sets out that most new development will be directed into named settlements. Taddington is a named settlement.
22. L1 - *Landscape character and valued characteristics*. Seeks to ensure that all development conserves and enhances valued landscape character and sites, features and species of biodiversity importance.
23. Policy CC1 states that development must make the most efficient and sustainable use of land, buildings and natural resources.

Development Management Policies

24. Policy DMC1 states that any development outside of named settlements which have the potential for wide scale landscape impacts must provide a landscape assessment with reference to the Landscape Strategy and Action Plan.
25. Policy DMC3 states that where development is acceptable in principle, it will be permitted provided that its detailed treatment is 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. Particular attention will be paid to siting, scale, form, mass, levels, height and orientation in relation to existing buildings, settlement form and character, and the degree to which buildings and their design, details, materials and finishes reflect or complement the style and traditions of the locality as well as other valued characteristics of the area.
26. Policy DME1 sets out the criteria where new agricultural and forestry buildings, structures, and associated working spaces will be permitted. It needs to be demonstrated to the Authority's satisfaction that the building is at the scale functionally required for the purpose. Information on the following criteria need to be met:
- i) location and size of farm or forestry holding;
 - ii) type of agriculture or forestry practiced on the farm or forestry holding;
 - iii) intended use and size of proposed building;
 - iv) intended location and appearance of proposed building;
 - v) stocking type, numbers and density per hectare;
 - vi) area covered by crops, including any timber crop;
 - vii) existing buildings, uses and why these are unable to cope with existing or perceived demand;
 - viii) dimensions and layout;
 - ix) predicted building requirements by type of stock/crop/other usage; and
 - x) contribution to the Authority's objectives, e.g. conservation of valued landscape character as established in the Landscape Strategy and Action Plan, including winter housing to protect landscape.

It goes on further to state new agricultural and forestry structures shall:

- i) located close to the farmstead or main group of farm buildings, and in all cases relate well to, and make best use of, existing buildings, trees, walls and other landscape features
- ii) not be in isolated locations requiring access track, roads or services
- iii) respect the design, scale, mass and colouring of existing buildings and building traditions characteristics of the area
- iv) avoid adverse effects of the area's valued characteristics including important local views, making use of the least obtrusive or otherwise damaging possible locations avoid farm to the setting, fabric, and integrity of the Natural Zone.

Supplementary Planning Documents

27. The Peak District have an Agricultural Developments SPG adopted in 2003. It offers guidance to applicants in preparing applications for agricultural development. It sets out further guidance on what information is required as part of the submission, including stock type and numbers, density, crop, demand etc.

ASSESSMENT

Agricultural Justification

28. The development site is an existing agricultural smallholding, operating on 4.5 hectares of agricultural land immediately surrounding Curbar. The holding primarily rear poultry, having had consent for two mobile hen houses, each capable of accommodating approximately 150 hens. It also has a small flock of sheep, horses and bee hives.
29. The proposed development would be used primarily for storage purposes. The landowner currently has several pieces of farm equipment, including small tractor, trailer, chain harrow, and paddock spitter which are currently stored outside on the parcel of land subject to this application. In addition to storing these pieces of equipment, the structure would also be used during lambing season for the 10 ewes on site. Also stored within the building would be 100-150 rectangular hay bales and 2/3 round haybales used for different purposes across the holding along with equipment used in conjunction with the production of honey.
30. The building would primarily have a timber appearance, featuring horizontal boarding up to 1.4m, with vertical boarding to the eaves. It is anticipated that the timber would remain untreated and be allowed to weather naturally. This would make the barn feature a similar appearance to the smaller hen-houses across the site, which are a muted grey tone. It is noted that there is an existing structure on site, a small traditional stone-built barn located some 70m north of the development site, behind the manege and leylandii hedgerow. The applicant explained that this barn would be unsuitable for lambing as it would not comply with DEFRA guidance. It is also distinctly separate from the main farmyard; over 100m away from the dwellinghouse, and it is considered that having the base of operations located at the existing barn would expand the working area into the open countryside which is contrary to local policy which requires agricultural development to be located close to existing buildings.
31. The application has been supported by plans that demonstrate the full dimensions and layout of the development. The barn would run parallel to the existing hedge line to the north of the site, and would be located near to the existing stable blocks on site. It is considered that the small parcel of land the development is located is the main working location of the small holding. It is where the majority of equipment is currently stored, and is close to the existing built-form of Curbar. By outlining the equipment that is to be stored in the building, the applicant has explained the rationale for its dimensions, requiring the eaves height of 3.18m to store their tractor and hay bales.
32. In addition to the barn itself, the application also proposes additional planting to the southern boundary of the land parcel. It is noted that the properties to the north of Rockland have expansive gardens that extend well beyond the garden-line of the properties south of Rockland. The properties and their curtilage to the south feature relatively small land parcels that are contained by hedges. This is in contrast to the land to the east of Rockland, which features predominantly large fields bound by dry-stone walls. It is considered that the land subject to this application is more reminiscent of the smaller land parcels to the north, as opposed to the larger ones to the east. As such, the provision of hedgerow planting to the south is considered to be appropriate, and would form a good boundary between the expansive grazing land to the south and east, and the smaller contained parcels to the north.
33. It is considered that the application has demonstrated an appropriate need and justification for the proposed development. They have outlined the holdings size and given information relating to its operation, stating why the proposal is important for their

ongoing operation. They have provided sufficient details relating to its location, size, and colour. It is considered that the proposed landscaping would provide an enhancement to the landscape, in line with the Landscape Strategy and Action Plan. As a result, the development is compliant with policy DME1A.

34. Part B of policy DME1 sets out 5 further criteria that agricultural development must comply with. It is considered that this application meets all the criteria set out; it is located close to the main group of buildings and would not require additional access tracks. Its impact on the valued characteristics of the landscape and local amenity will be discussed in later sections of this report. Subject to not harming the amenity or landscape, this application is considered to be compliant with policy DME1.

Impact on valued characteristics of the landscape and Natural Zone

35. The development site is located approximately 650m away from Curbar Edge, a popular walking and climbing spot which rises above Curbar and the wider Derwent Valley. Accordingly, it is vital to ensure that the development would not detrimentally impact the valued characteristics of the landscape – as required by policy L1. The development site is located within the Derwent Valley Farmlands with Villages landscape type. This area is characterised by:
- A low lying, gently undulating topography
 - Pastoral farmland closed by hedgerows and some drystone walls
 - Small to medium sized fields
 - Dense streamline and scattered hedgerow trees
 - Gritstone villages and outlying farms with associated dwellings and field barns.
36. It is considered that the proposed development would not impact the valued characteristics of the landscape. It is acknowledged that the development would be visible from the open access land approximately 50m south-east; however, from this viewpoint the development would be seen in relation to Curbar village. Towards the northern end of the Bent, the built-form of the village becomes increasingly undefined due to large gardens and curtilages. Additionally, the stable block and manege to the east of Rockland have created an extension to the built form of the village, and it is considered that the addition of an agricultural building in this location would not be harmful, due to the existing development on site. It is noted that the development site is distinctly different to the land immediately south and east. The adjacent parcels of land appear less cultivated, characterised by rough grassland and large rocks, whilst the development site is more reminiscent of the cultivated and more formal land to the north. Accordingly, it is considered that from the open access land immediately to the east, there would be no adverse impacts on the valued characteristics of the landscape.
37. Curbar Edge is designated open access land, and due to its raised elevation, affords expansive views across Curbar. Notwithstanding this, the existing leylandii hedgerow surrounding the riding arena screens the development site from the Edge. Policy DME1 states that agricultural development should utilise existing trees and landscape features, and it is considered that the location of the proposed development would render it screened from Curbar Edge. Whilst the view from Curbar Edge would be highly sensitive, the proposed developments placement west of the riding arena would ensure that it would be well-screened, protecting the valued characteristics of Curbar Edge and Derwent Valley Slopes & Valleys with Woodland character type.
38. Several representations raised concern over the impact of the development on the Dark Skies above Curbar. Whilst this does not appear to be a formal designation, it is noted that dark skies are a valued characteristic of the Peak District landscape. Accordingly, if this application receives a positive determination, a condition is suggested to be applied

that stipulates no external lighting on site, unless agreed in writing with the National Park Authority.

39. The adjacent open access land is also designated Natural Zone. Policy DMC2 states that only in exceptional circumstances is development acceptable in the Natural Zone. Despite being visible from the designation, it is not considered that the proposed development would impact it in anyway.
40. The proposed development would not impact the valued characteristics of the landscape. The development would be screened from sensitive receptors, such as Curbar Edge, and the additional planting proposed as part of the development is compliant with the valued characteristics of the landscape type. The proposal is therefore compliant with policies L1, DMC1, and DMC2.

Impact on residential amenity

41. Several of the representation letters received during the course of the application raised concern over the impact of the development on nearby residents, particularly those in Mistley Garth immediately to the north, and the residents on The Green to the south.
42. It is noted that there is mature vegetation separating the development site from Mistley Garth. The exact location of the proposal is some distance from the property itself, with the dwelling benefitting from a large curtilage and garden space. The placement of the barn has been purposely located some distance from the boundary to ensure no complications with the root zone of the mature trees. Accordingly, it is considered that there would be no impact on the amenity of this property. Indeed, the representation letter raised concern over the outlook from the garden, which is not a material consideration. The existing boundary treatment would ensure that the amenity of this property is conserved.
43. Approximately 115m to the south is the rear boundary of the properties on The Green. It is considered that due to the separation distance between the properties and development site that there would be no impact on amenity. The site is an existing agricultural holding, and the provision of an additional building would not contribute to an increase in movements, or a variation in the time of vehicle movements associated with the holding. It is considered that the only impact on the residents of the Green would be a minor impact to their outlook, which cannot be considered in the planning balance. The associated sections plan demonstrates that the degree of cut and fill required to facilitate a flat surface would not contribute to an overbearing influence on the properties of the Green. Notwithstanding this, the proposed planting would help assimilate the structure into the local landscape. It would not seek to fully screen the proposal, but the additional planting along this boundary would soften the impact of the proposal locally.
44. There was some concern raised over lighting associated with the development. As noted previously, if this application were to be approved, a condition restricting outdoor lighting would be implemented to ensure the development would not impact the dark skies and neighbouring properties.
45. Due to the nature and use of the proposed barn, there are no anticipated impacts by way of noise or odour. If approved, a condition requiring it to remain in agricultural use, and to be removed when no longer required would be implemented.
46. The proposed development would not impinge on the residential amenity of the neighbouring properties.

Conclusion

- 47. The application has demonstrated that the landowner has a functional requirement for the building in connection to their existing agricultural holding. The scale of the development is considered appropriate for the scale of operation, and the structure has been designed to respond well to its surrounding and assimilate well into the landscape.
- 48. The proposal would not impact on the valued characteristics of the landscape, and would not detrimentally impact nearby sensitive receptors, such as Curbar Gap and Curbar Edge.
- 49. Planning conditions would be implemented to ensure that the proposed development would not impact on Curbar's dark skies, or residential amenity.

Human Rights

- 50. Any human rights issues have been considered and addressed in the preparation of this report.
- 51. List of Background Papers (not previously published):
- 52. Nil

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