

**9. FULL APPLICATION - ALTERATIONS TO AGRICULTURAL BUILDING AT NORTH LEES FARM, NORTH LEES HALL, HATHERSAGE. (NP/DDD/0715/0685, P.6193, 24/4/15, 423536/383448, MN)**

**APPLICANT: PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY**

**Site and Surroundings**

North Lees Hall is a Grade II\* listed building sited in open countryside approximately 1.5 miles north of Hathersage village. It is a 16th century tower house property which is in use for holiday letting accommodation with a separate lower level 'farmhouse' wing to the north east. It is constructed of rubble gritstone and underwent significant internal restoration in 1965.

The property is part of the North Lees Estate and is owned by the Peak District National Park Authority. The farmhouse wing of the Hall has recently been refurbished and is now occupied by a farming tenant.

The Hall and farmhouse are surrounded by agricultural fields and are accessed from Birley Lane up a long track, which is also a public right of way. The farm access road and footpath narrows as it winds around the Hall and farmhouse to the rear, north side, where there are several agricultural barns, some of which are also Listed.

This application relates to the northernmost building in this group. It is a large and relatively modern steel framed agricultural shed with an open front which is set partly in to the ground that rises behind it. It is the main modern building on the holding and is in need of upgrading to meet current farming needs as well as remedial action to stop the water from the higher ground behind seeping into the building.

The site is outside of any conservation area.

**Proposal**

The application seeks to make the following alterations to the modern agricultural shed:

- Excavating to the rear and side elevations of the building to install a waterproof barrier against the walls before restoring the levels
- Replacing the unsurfaced floor of the building with a concrete slab, with a 2m apron projecting beyond the front of the building
- Introduce some timber boarding to the front and rear elevations to better enclose the building from the elements

**RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the application be **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions:

1. **3 year time limit**
2. **In accordance with submitted plans**
3. **Timber cladding to be stained dark brown**

## **Key Issues**

The key issues in assessing this proposal are:

- The acceptability of the principle of the development
- Design matters
- The impact of the development on the setting of the Listed Hall and farm buildings

## **History**

1985 - Alterations and additional car parking

1988 - Formation of 2 holiday flats

1992 - Change of use of former pigsties to agricultural use with domestic storage

2001 - Listed Building Consent - repair and refurbishment work

2013 - Listed Building Consent – installation of new boiler and external flue to main house

2013 - Listed Building Consent granted for refurbishment of farmhouse

2014 – Change of use granted for serving of teas and light refreshments at farm

## **Consultations**

Highway Authority - No objections.

Parish Council - No response at time of writing.

Derbyshire Dales District Council -No response at time of writing.

## **Main Policies**

Relevant Core Strategy policies: GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, DS1, L1, L3.

Relevant Local Plan policies: LC4, LC6, LC13.

Core Strategy policy GSP1 reiterates that the Authority has a statutory duty to foster the social and economic welfare of local communities in the National Park whilst GSP2 states opportunities to enhance the National Park should be acted upon. Core Strategy policy GSP3 seeks to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

Core Strategy policies DS1 details the development strategy for the National Park. This permits, in principle, development required for agricultural purposes in the countryside.

Core Strategy policy L1 states that development must conserve and enhance valued landscape character, as identified in the Landscape Strategy and Action Plan and other valued characteristics.

Core Strategy policy L3 requires development to conserve historic assets.

Local Plan policy LC6, which states that any applications for development affecting listed buildings must clearly demonstrate how the building will be preserved and enhanced and why the development is desirable or necessary.

Local Plan policy LC13 is also relevant, stating that any agricultural development must avoid harm to an areas valued characteristics, making use of the least obtrusive or otherwise damaging possible location.

It is considered that these policies are consistent with the core planning principles set out in paragraph 17 of the National Planning Policy Framework and the policies in the Framework when taken as a whole because both documents seek to support rural economies, seek to secure high quality design, and promote the importance of landscape protection within the National Park.

## **Assessment**

### **Principle**

The site is in open countryside where policy DS1 permits, in principle, development required for agricultural purposes. The principle of altering the existing agricultural building is therefore acceptable.

### **Design matters**

The alterations proposed are considered to have only a minor effect on the appearance of the building, and each part of the proposal is assessed below.

The concrete floor would be mostly contained within the building having no wider impact, and the concrete apron to the front would extend into an existing yard area where it will not appear out of keeping.

The timber cladding is limited to the front and rear elevations and, subject to having a dark stained finish, would appear recessive and would not detract from the buildings appearance. Such a recessive finish could be required by planning condition if permission was to be granted.

The ground to be excavated will be replaced with a better draining substitute and to the same levels after works are completed and so there will be no lasting landscape impact of these works.

Overall, the design of the development is considered appropriate to its purpose and to conserve the appearance of the building and its setting as required by policies LC4 and LC13.

### **Impact on the Listed buildings**

In terms of impact on the Listed farm buildings, these are already viewed in close relation to the modern agricultural building. The proposed development is modest in relation to what is already present. As a result the impacts arising from the development are considered to conserve the setting of the Listed buildings and do not detract from the buildings' significance.

The setting of the Hall itself is considered to be unaffected by the development due to the separation between it and the application building, and because they are not viewed together in any important views.

The application is therefore considered to comply with policies L3 and LC6.

### **Other matters**

The existing farm building has an unrestricted agricultural use in planning terms and is regularly used for the housing of livestock. This application proposes no change to the use of the building, nor does it provide any additional capacity that would lead to it being able to house additional livestock. It is therefore considered that the development does not have any changed impact on amenity, complying with policy LC4 in this regard.

## **Conclusion**

Officers have assessed the application against all relevant planning policy and all other material considerations. Subject to a suitable finish for the timber cladding being secured by planning condition the proposal is considered to comply with both national and local planning policies. All other material matters have also been considered and are considered to be acceptable.

The application is therefore recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

## **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