

10. FULL APPLICATION - TWO STOREY REAR EXTENSION TO AN AGRICULTURAL WORKER'S DWELLING, AT VICARAGE BARN HOLLINSCLOUGH (NP/SM/0223/0121, P.1813)

APPLICANT: MR AND MRS HUDSON

Summary

1. The application property, Vicarage Barn was converted to an agricultural workers dwelling in 2016, and is situated in a prominent and isolated position, next to a public footpath with the dramatic backdrop of Chrome and Parkhouse Hills relatively close by to the north-east.
2. The application is for a rear two storey extension with a bedroom at the first floor and an office at ground floor to accommodate a growing family.
3. The proposed design of the extension detracts from the simple form and agricultural character of the original barn and would significantly harm its character and appearance and setting within the wider landscape. This harm would not be outweighed by the benefits of additional living space for the current family.
4. The application is recommended for refusal.

Site and Surroundings

5. This application relates to a converted barn situated in an isolated and exposed position about 240m north-east of Hollinsclough hamlet.
6. The building is adjacent to the narrow northerly back lane between Hollinsclough and Longnor. A Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT) passes diagonally through the yard area to the front of the dwelling, which is also signposted as a public footpath.
7. The barn is framed by the dramatic backdrop of Chrome and Parkhouse Hills, which are situated ½km to the north-east. Access to the property is directly off the BOAT and there is a grassed yard area to the front of the barn.
8. Planning permission was granted in 2016 for the conversion of the barn to an agricultural dwelling.
9. The building was a traditional barn with a low two-storey form, constructed of roughly coursed natural gritstone under a Staffordshire Blue natural plain clay tile roof. It has a fairly simple appearance, with pleasant symmetrical frontage, three door openings on the ground floor and a central window above. The external corners of the barn are dressed with natural gritstone quoinwork and there is projecting gritstone string coursing to the eaves. There is a single-storey, lean-to building attached to its north-eastern gable, with a matching Staffordshire blue tile roof.
10. The dwelling sits on level ground close to the lane and occupies a prominent position in the landscape, particularly when approaching the site along the back lane and the public footpath.
11. The approved conversion scheme was considered acceptable as the accommodation was retained within the existing shell of the building, utilising existing openings and without new extensions.

12. The property is visible from distant viewpoints along the southerly approach road into Hollinsclough from Longnor 460m to the south-west. From these viewpoints the dwelling appears relatively isolated and is framed by the iconic limestone hills of Chrome and Parkhouse. Consequently, it presents a pleasing composition in the landscape that makes a significant contribution to the character of the surrounding landscape.
13. The converted barn is not listed or within a conservation area. Nevertheless, given its history and character it is considered a non-designated heritage asset.

Proposal

14. The proposal is for a rear two storey extension with an office at the ground level and bedroom at the first floor.
15. Pre-application advice was sought by the applicant in 2022 and they were advised that;

A two storey gabled extension would be very unlikely to be supported, with the existing building being a modest barn of simple form. In a further response, weight was given to their circumstances, advising that a modest lean-to off the rear could potentially be supported; about 3m wide x 2.5m deep.

That advice was not followed in the current proposals.

16. A small attempt has been made to preserve the agricultural character in the extension with only one 'picking hole' style opening on the gable. However this is not sufficient conservation of the agricultural character of the building.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the application be REFUSED for the following reasons

- 1 The proposed scheme by virtue of the scale, form, massing and design of the proposed extension detracts from the significance of the barn as a non-designated heritage asset by virtue of its simple form and agricultural character, contrary also to the Authority's Building Design Guide and Conversion of Historic Buildings SPD.**
- 2 The barn occupies a prominent and exposed position in a landscape of exceptional value that should be conserved because of its intrinsic scenic beauty. The current proposals would fail to meet this objective and the proposed extension on the residential dwelling would spoil the character and setting of the traditional barn conversion by further domesticating the structure in this sensitive location. The proposals would therefore be contrary to Core Strategy policies GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, L1 and L3, Development Management Policies DMC3, DMC5, DMH7, and national planning policies in the Framework.**

Key Issues

17. Impact of the proposed alterations and extensions on the character and appearance of the existing building and its setting.

Relevant Planning History

18. July 2022 – Planning enquiry concerning likelihood of approval to extension. PE\2022\ENQ\45918

19. July 2016 – Non material amendment on NP/SM/0315/0158. NP/NMA/0616/0512 – Approved
20. March 2015 – Proposed change of use of New Building into an agricultural workers dwelling. NP/SM/0315/0158 – Approved

Consultations

21. Parish Council – Provided a comprehensive statement in support of the development. This is available to view on the public file.
22. Highway Authority – No response at time of writing.
23. Borough Council – No response to date.

Representations

24. We have received eleven letters of support, all on the grounds that the young family contribute positively to the local village and wishing to retain them as an asset in the community.

Main Policies

25. Relevant Core Strategy policies: GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, DS1, L1, L3 and CC1
26. Relevant Development Management policies: DMC1, DMC3, DMC5, DMC10, DMH7

National Planning Policy Framework

27. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 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 our 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. There is no significant conflict between the development plan and the NPPF and therefore our policies should be given full weight in the determination of this application.
28. Paragraph 176 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.
29. Paragraph 189 of the NPPF states, [heritage] assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

30. The cumulative impact of incremental changes may have as great an effect on the significance of a heritage asset as a larger scale change. Where the significance of a heritage asset has been compromised in the past by unsympathetic development to the asset itself or its setting, consideration still needs to be given to whether additional change will further detract from, or can enhance, the significance of the asset in order to accord with NPPF policies.

Peak District National Park Core Strategy

31. Policy DS1 sets out the Development Strategy for the National Park. DS1.C. sets out the forms of development that are acceptable in principle in the countryside outside of the Natural Zone. Policy DS1 states that extensions to existing buildings are acceptable in principle in the countryside.
32. Policy GSP1 requires all development to be consistent with the National Park's legal purposes and duty. Where there is an irreconcilable conflict between the statutory purposes, the Sandford Principle will be applied and the conservation and enhancement of the National Park will be given priority.
33. 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.
34. 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, impact on living conditions of communities, impact on access and traffic levels and use of sustainable modes of transport.
35. DS1 Development Strategy and L1 Landscape character and valued characteristics, both support agricultural development in the open countryside, provided that development respects, conserves and enhances the valued characteristics of the site, paying particular attention to impact upon the character and setting of buildings and siting, landscaping and building materials.
36. Policy L3 says that development must conserve and where appropriate enhance or reveal the significance of archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic assets and their settings, including statutory designations and other heritage assets of international, national, regional or local importance. Other than, in exceptional circumstances development will not be permitted where it is likely to cause harm to the significance of any cultural heritage asset.
37. Policy CC1 says that in order to build in resilience to and mitigate the causes of climate change all development must: make the most efficient and sustainable use of land, buildings and natural resources; take account of the energy hierarchy; be directed away from flood risk areas and reduce overall risk from flooding; achieve the highest possible standards of carbon reductions and water efficiency.

Development Management Policies

38. Policy DMC3. A says 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.

39. 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.
40. Policy DMC5 says that applications for development affecting a heritage asset, including its setting must clearly demonstrate its significance including how any identified features of value will be conserved and where possible enhanced and why the propose development is desirable or necessary. The supporting evidence must be proportionate to the significance of the asset and proposals likely to affect archaeological and potential archaeological interest should be supported by appropriate information.
41. DMC5. E says that if applicants fail to provide adequate or accurate detailed information the application will be refused. DMC5. F says that development of a non-designated heritage asset will not be permitted if it would result in any harm to, or loss of, the significance, character and appearance of a heritage asset unless the development is considered by the Authority to be acceptable following a balanced judgement that takes into account the significance of the heritage asset.
42. DMC10. A says that conversion of a heritage asset will be permitted provided that it can accommodate the new use without changes that adversely affect its character and that changes brought about by the new use conserves the significance of the heritage asset, its setting and the landscape. DMC10. B says that particular attention will be paid to the impact of domestication and urbanisation including the provision of safe access, amenity space, parking and domestic curtilage.
43. Policy DMH7. A says that extensions and alterations will be permitted provided that the proposal does not detract from the character, appearance and amenity of the original building, its setting or neighbouring buildings, dominate the original dwelling, particularly where it is a heritage asset or create or lead to undesirable changes to the landscape or any other valued characteristic.

Supplementary planning documents (SPD) and other material considerations

44. The adopted climate change and sustainable building SPD provides detailed guidance on construction methods and renewable technologies along with a framework for how development can demonstrate compliance with policy CC1.
45. The adopted design guide SPD and supporting building design guide provides detailed guidance on the local building tradition within the National Park and how this should be utilised to inform high quality new design that conserves and enhances the National Park.
46. The conversion of historic buildings SPD provides detail about form, design and materials for proposals to convert historic buildings within the National Park.

Assessment

Principle

47. The key issue for this application is whether the proposed development would be of appropriate design and scale, which would conserve the character and appearance of

the existing building, its setting and the landscape, particularly bearing in mind that the building is a successfully converted barn and a non-designated heritage asset.

48. Within the guiding principle behind the design of any conversion should be that the character of the original building and its setting should be respected and retained. This means that in most cases the barn should afterwards look like a converted barn, and not like a new house. When converting traditional buildings, new uses should not require the construction of extensions or ancillary buildings.
49. Our adopted Supplementary Planning Document (Detailed Design Guide) for alterations and extensions states that extensions should be sympathetic, subservient to the original building, and limited in size. The SPD states that the original character of the property should not be destroyed when providing additional development; the scale of extension that can be accommodated satisfactorily is dependent on the nature of the existing building. The Building Design Guide provides technical guidance on form, scale and massing and the Conversions SPD provides detailed guidance. It is considered that the existing converted barn follows these principles.

Impact

50. The building is an attractive converted barn, which is characterised by its simple vernacular design, use of traditional materials and its historic functional relationship with the surrounding land. The building has been sensitively converted and makes a positive contribution to the limestone plateau landscape and its setting within the foothills of Chrome and Parkhouse.
51. The building design guidance on barn conversions states that the scale, and basic shape of the building should not be compromised by the conversion. It is best to work within the existing shell of the building and to avoid extending upwards and outwards. The original conversion followed this guidance and renovations were kept within the original shell of the building, using original openings to retain its character. A two-storey extension off the rear elevation of the property would not be in keeping with the intention to retain the character of the building by keeping within the existing shell. Guidance also states that the character of the barn remain unchanged after the conversion.
52. Field barns are vernacular buildings and an important feature of the White Peak landscape which surround the villages. They were constructed out of local materials, and designed for their local landscape. As patterns of land holdings have changed (the village farm houses serving scattered fields are now gone, replaced by larger farms with houses and farm buildings on the land being farmed) and farming methods have improved, these fine buildings are our best informants on historic farming practices and architecture.
53. The Authority's adopted policies allow for conversion of traditional barns such as this if the building can accommodate the new use without changes, which would adversely affect its character; such changes include significant enlargement or other alterations to the form and mass, inappropriate new window spaces or doorways, and major rebuilding. The former barn has been converted in accordance with our policies and any proposed extensions must be considered in that context.
54. Having regard to the size of the extension, its form and the impact on the plan form of the existing building we consider that the proposed extension would be a significant enlargement, which would harm the original building and its character and appearance. The proposed extensions are therefore contrary to policies GSP3, L3, DMC3, DMC5 and DMH7 and guidance within our adopted Supplementary Planning Documents.

Landscape Impact

55. Vicarage Barn, as it stands, is a relatively modest dwelling of simple form, and is situated in a prominent and isolated position, next to a public footpath with the dramatic backdrop of Chrome and Parkhouse Hills relatively close by to the north-east.
56. The barn is considered to be isolated, despite it being only a short distance from Hollinsclough. It sits in a pastoral landscape with open views in particular towards Chrome and Parkhouse Hills, both iconic limestone hills. It is visible from close views from the adjacent road and BOAT and from the wider landscape when approaching Hollinsclough on its southerly approach road. Consequently, it is considered that any further developments on the barn conversion would have a significant adverse impact, not only on the character and immediate setting of the barn itself, but also on its wider landscape setting and its contribution to the setting of Chrome and Parkhouse Hills.
57. Whilst the design of the extension is sympathetic to the original structure, containing a minimal amount of new openings and massing situated lower than the current roof, given the position of the structure in such an exposed and prominent location within the landscape, it is considered that the scale of this extension would detract from the original character of the building from several vantage points, as well as detracting from the valued characteristics of the local area and further domestication of the holding would have a significant adverse impact.
58. Overall, for the reasons set out above, the building would cause significant harm to the largely unsettled character of the landscape, contrary to policies GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, L1, DMC1, and DMC3 of the Authority's Local Plan, as well as to the provisions of the NPPF in so far as they relate to conserving the scenic beauty of National Parks.

Other issues

59. The proposals would not harm the privacy or amenity of any neighbouring properties because of the isolated location of the building. The proposal therefore accords with policies GSP3 and DMC3 in these respects.
60. No alterations to the access to the highway are proposed and the proposal would not affect off-street parking in accordance with policies DMT3 and DMT8.
61. The proposed extension would be constructed with insulation to walls, floor, and roof to meet current building regulations. It would be constructed using reclaimed stone as well as tiles to match those existing. These proposals are considered sufficient to comply with Policy CC1 on sustainable development.
62. The application property is an agricultural dwelling, which limits the family's ability to relocate and as a growing family they require more room for accommodation. These circumstances were addressed during pre-application correspondence and the issues were given weight to merit the consideration for a single-storey extension, large enough for a small bedroom. This advice was not followed.

Conclusion

63. The design of the extension detracts from the simple form and agricultural character of the building as a non-designated heritage asset, contrary to Building Design Guidance and Conversion of Traditional Buildings SPD.
64. The barn occupies a prominent and exposed position in a landscape of exceptional value that should be safeguarded because of its intrinsic scenic beauty. The current

proposals would fail to meet this objective and the proposed extension on the residential dwelling would spoil the character and setting of the traditional barn conversion by further domesticating the structure in this sensitive location. The proposals would therefore be contrary to Core Strategy policies GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, L1 and L3, saved Local Plan policies DMC1, DMC3, DMC5, DMC10, DMH7, and national planning policies in the Framework.

65. Giving regard to our statutory purposes, duty and policies within the development plan, in this case, the benefits of the development in providing a larger agricultural dwelling for a local family would not outweigh the significant harm to the character and appearance of the barn and its setting.

66. Therefore, the proposed development is contrary to the development plan. We have considered all other material considerations; however, these do not indicate that a contrary decision should be taken. The application is therefore recommended for refusal.

Human Rights

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

List of Background Papers (not previously published)

68. Nil

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