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**14. FULL APPLICATION: DEMOLITION OF EXISTING FILTER HOUSE AND ERECTION OF NO.3 NEW DWELLINGS WITH ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING AND PARKING, FORMER FILTER HOUSE, LONG CAUSEWAY, SHEFFIELD (NP/S/0923/1021, JRS)**

**APPLICANT: MR HOLMES**

**Summary**

1. The application is for the demolition of the former water treatment works and the erection of three new dwellings around a central courtyard.
2. The existing building is a post-war brick building which has been heavily vandalised and is in a poor condition. It is not considered to be of sufficient merit to warrant conservation through conversion.
3. The site is considered to be a brownfield site where an appropriate development would be in accordance with national and local policies.
4. The proposed scheme is generally considered to be acceptable in terms of its scale, layout and design, subject to some amendments. The application is therefore recommended for approval.

**Site and Surroundings**

5. The former Redmires Filter House is located west of Sheffield, located approximately half a mile inside the Peak District National Park boundary. The building is sat within mature woodland just north of the Redmires Lower Reservoir, within a site of approximately 1.1 acres. The site is accessed from Redmires Road, via a single lane tarmac road which also serves three houses which were once part of the reservoir operation. This road also serves the Redmires Water Works, an additional treatment plant constructed in 1988 to assist the original filter house with processing water.
6. There is a public footpath that runs to the west of the site boundary and a concession footpath which runs to the south. Yorkshire Water (YW) have a right of vehicular access across the site, to the sub-station that sits just outside the eastern site boundary. The building is not located within a Conservation Area, and none of the buildings are listed.
7. Since the building was sold by YW in 2013, it has fallen into a state of disrepair, with a number of issues noted in the Design and Access Statement:
  - Metal rainwater goods have been stolen causing increased damp and water ingress issues.
  - Graffiti and vandalism to both the exterior and interior of the building (the previously installed metal security hoardings have also been stolen).
  - Evidence of people sleeping rough and anti-social behaviour, such that neighbouring properties have installed CCTV to provide security protection.
  - Fly tipping across the site.
  - Cracking is present across each building elevation, typically spreading across window heads and up towards the copings. The defects to the masonry are likely a combination of shrinkage cracks and failure of lintels due to corrosion.
  - The east corner showed the most extensive cracking with masonry above the crack having shifted as much as 8mm.
8. In terms of the site's history, construction started on the Filter House in 1948, and it was officially opened in 1950. It is large single-storey building which was designed in a post-war utilitarian style and is of solid masonry construction with a light brown brick external leaf. A stone capped parapet conceals the flat, solid concrete roof, which supports a

series of large rooflights. Openings in the elevations are emphasised with stone surrounds; windows are single glazed metal framed and doors are timber panelled construction. The building provided water to south-west Sheffield and operated until its closure in 1997. In 2013, the then-owners, Yorkshire Water (YW), stripped out of the mechanical apparatus, before selling the building to a private owner.

## **Proposal**

9. The proposal is to demolish the existing building and to erect three dwellings on the site.
10. The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement, a preliminary ecological assessment, a flood risk assessment, an arboricultural impact assessment and a climate change statement.
11. The Design and Access Statement says the following about the proposed development (selected extracts; the whole statement can be seen on the website):

*Aim: The applicant wishes to replace the existing unsympathetic filter house with three new family homes. The aim is for high-quality architecture that is complimentary to the location and creates an attractive settlement for the new owners.*

*Farmstead: The dwellings are arranged around a central courtyard, reflecting a traditional farmstead typology. The plots are divided between one traditional farmhouse (left in image) and two barns with cart-sheds. The courtyard in the centre of the scheme mirrors traditional farmstead arrangements, providing access to each of the plots and a shared communal space, whilst also allowing a route for access to the Yorkshire Water sub-station at the back of the site.*

*Design: The design aims to reflect the vernacular style of the Peak District to ensure harmony with the context. The aim is to create a pleasing visual relationship between the historic buildings in the area and the new development. As outlined in this document the site strategy proposes a traditional farmstead arrangement with main farmhouse (Plot 01), and ancillary barns (Plot 02/3). As such, the form, materials and detailing of Plots 1 and Plots 2/3 differ to reflect that hierarchy. The buildings are all designed to appear strong, solid and well proportioned. Their forms have a horizontal emphasis which readily harmonises with the landscape. The buildings all have a narrow gable, however the barns appear subservient to the main house with lower eaves compared to the main house. The elevations have been developed to balance the proportions of the overall shape and their openings, ensuring a high solid-to-void relationship with a simple arrangement of openings.*

*Volume: The proposed buildings are considerably smaller than the footprint and volume of the existing building and will reduce the impact of the site on the surrounding area. The calculations are as follows:*

- Existing Volume 3471m<sup>3</sup> Proposed Volume 2687m<sup>3</sup>
- Existing Footprint 667m<sup>2</sup> Proposed Footprint 545m<sup>2</sup>

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

**That the application be APPROVED subject to the following conditions:**

1. **Standard 3-year time limit for commencement.**
2. **Adopt amended plans subject to detailed design conditions relating to materials, windows, doors, rainwater goods, etc including prior approval of sample materials and sample stone panel.**

3. **Withdraw permitted development rights for alterations, extensions and ancillary buildings together with boundary walls and fences.**
4. **Carry out landscaping scheme, including replacement tree-planting, woodland enhancement and management, walling and hard surfacing.**
5. **Site drainage conditions recommend by LLFA and the Environment Agency, including provision of a SUDs scheme.**
6. **Implement recommendations from preliminary ecological assessment.**
7. **Retain garages for garaging and storage**
8. **Agree means of waste disposal**

### **Key Issues**

- Whether the development is acceptable in principle.
- Whether the existing building is a non-designated heritage asset that should be conserved through an alternative use
- Whether the proposed redevelopment would achieve an enhancement of the site.
- Design and layout

### **History**

12. 1986 - NP/S/0786/017: Planning permission granted for new water treatment works on a site to the west of the access road.
13. 2019 - Pre-application Enquiry 29779: This related to accommodation for 32 guests in bunk house type accommodation, the running of courses and two workshops for lease. Advised this was unlikely to be acceptable as it was contrary to policies and generally not in a sustainable location also that we have previously advised that the building is not worthy of conversion. A second part to the enquiry was submitted and ideas for the site scaled back to self-catering accommodation for walkers/ cyclists, the scale was not clear but officers envisaged approximately 6 units. Officers advised again that this would be contrary to RT2 but also advised that there have been conversions permitted where some industrial structures have been proven to be worthy of conversion and therefore it may be worth undertaking a heritage appraisal of the building to support any forthcoming application. Advised that Flood risk assessment would be needed as the site access passes through zone 2 and 3.
14. June 2023 - Informal advice given that the redevelopment of the site for three houses in an agricultural farmyard layout was likely to be acceptable in principle as it was considered that this is an undesirable building to retain and convert as it is of no architectural or historic merit (there was no pre-application advice service available at that time, but informal, without prejudice advice was given). The Officer advice was that the site is not really a sustainable location for social housing and there will be a cost to removal of the building and remediating the site. An element of market housing could therefore be accepted and would be supported in principle but only sufficient to achieve the removal of the building/remediation of the site and would need to be supported by a clear viability appraisal. The advice also suggested a tighter layout than what was proposed in submitted sketches.

15. November 2022 - NP/S/0122/0088: An application to convert the building into nine self-contained holiday units was refused for the following reasons (quoted in full given the comments of consultees):

*“1. The proposed change of use to 9 self-catering holiday accommodation units is unacceptable in principle as it includes conversion of a building which is not a traditional building of historic or vernacular merit. The proposal is therefore contrary to Core Strategy policy RT2.*

*2. The design is poor on the whole because it does not achieve a significant enhancement of the site as required by GSP2 and because it would add longevity to a building which is not worthy of conversion, and which detracts from the character and appearance of the area. In that respect the proposal is contrary to Core Strategy policies GSP2, GSP3 and Development Management Policies DMC3 and the SPD 'Design Guide' as it misses an opportunity to enhance the site by removing the building and redeveloping the site in accordance with the policies of the development plan.*

*3. The proposal does not include a tree survey in accordance with BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. Therefore, there is not sufficient information submitted in the application to be able to properly consider the impact on trees. The proposal is therefore contrary to Development Management Policy DMC13.*

*4. There are watercourses and ponds within close proximity of the site and the impact of the proposal on the ecology of these features has not been considered. For example, there may be the potential for Great Crested Newts and Water Voles to be affected. Therefore, the application is deficient on this matter and therefore contrary to the policies of the development plan Core Strategy Policy L2, Development Management Policies DMC11 and DMC12 and the NPPF insofar as they deal with protected species.*

*5. The proposal includes use of a package treatment plant without justifying why it is not connecting to the mains. The proposal is therefore contrary to the national Planning Practice Guidance in this respect”.*

## **Consultations**

16. Highway Authority: No response to date.
17. City Council (Planning): No response to date.
18. Lead Local Flood Authority: No objection.

*“Sheffield CC LLFA do not object to this application. Recommend that full details of the proposed surface water management for the site are secured by appropriate conditions. Outstanding information at application stage.*

*Outstanding Information:*

- 1. The application does not appear to include any SUDs provisions is contrary to NPPF clause 167 c). The LLFA/LDA consider this site appropriate for SUDs.*
- 2. The application form indicates surface water will be disposed of to an existing watercourse using SUDs however details of the existing or proposed systems have not been provided as part of the application. Applicant to provide details of existing surface water disposal routes.*
- 3. Climate change allowances stated in the Flood Risk Assessment are correct for river flows but incorrect for rainfall intensities and drainage design parameters”.*

19. Natural England: No objection.

Based on the plans submitted, Natural England considers that the proposed development will not have significant adverse impacts on protected landscapes and has no objection.

20. Environment Agency: No objection subject to conditions.

*“The proposed development will only meet the National Planning Policy Framework’s requirements in relation to flood risk if the following planning condition is included.*

*The development shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted flood risk assessment (ref 101166.590346 / September 2023 / Delta SImons) and the following mitigation measures it details: • Finished floor levels shall be set no lower than 150 mm above ground levels These mitigation measures shall be fully implemented prior to occupation and subsequently in accordance with the scheme’s timing/ phasing arrangements. The measures detailed above shall be retained and maintained thereafter throughout the lifetime of the development”.*

21. PDNPA Policy: Object as follows:

*“The applicant needs to assess the significance of the building for us to determine whether or not it is a non-designated heritage asset. It is my opinion that the building has a level of significance that makes it worthy of retention and is a good example of mid-century utilitarian architecture that is part of the history of this area in relation to the reservoirs. The applicant needs to assess the current building against the criteria in DMP policy DMC5. The local plan policy is clear in DMP 3.83 Demolition is only desirable where the building or structure involved does not make a positive contribution to the area. The existing building on site looks convertible and given its strong connection to the reservoirs and attractive design, makes a positive contribution to the area. As such retention of the building should be explored first. I have sent a consultation request to the Built Environment Team and Archaeology for their comments on this matter.*

*If the existing building is not convertible (I would like to understand why), then the applicant should reference what was there previously in any new development. In light of the lack of PDNPA design guidance for this type of development, the applicant should look to the National Design Guide and follow the 10 principles of good design and Historic England advice.*

*The proposal to knock down and build a faux courtyard of converted agricultural buildings is not appropriate in this location. The site is surrounded by woodland and has a strong attachment to the adjacent reservoirs. Any development should reference this character and the character of the building that is on site.*

*Policy HC1 is relevant. The Local Plan is clear that open market housing proposed under HC1.C must either be to achieve conservation or the enhancement of valued vernacular OR achieve conservation or enhancement in a DS1 settlement. It is my opinion the proposal does neither of these. In addition to this, as the proposal is for more than 1 unit, I would expect to see some affordable housing provided as part of a scheme in accordance with HC1C.*

*Policy DMH6 refers to the redevelopment of previously developed land for housing. However, the proposal neither conserves or enhances the valued character of the built environment or surrounding landscape and is not in or on the edge of an existing DS1 settlement.*

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*As submitted, it is my opinion the proposed development would not conserve or enhance the site and is therefore unacceptable. In addition to this, the development does not maximise the provision of affordable housing on site and no viability appraisal has been submitted to justify why this would not be viable”.*

22. PDNPA Building Conservation Officer: Object.

*“I’ve been asked to comment on the application to demolish the filter house at Redmires Reservoir and replace it with housing. I am aware that previously the authority has refused an application for conversion on the basis that the building is of no vernacular merit, although the Cultural Heritage Team was not previously consulted.*

*Overall the building can be described as a non-designated heritage asset due to its moderate aesthetic interest and moderate historic interest gained from its association with the landscape.*

*The landscape around the filter house at Redmires is complicated, including a mix of enclosed improved pasture, open grouse moor, quarries, plantations and, of course, the reservoirs.*

*Over the last 200 years the most significant force shaping the landscape around Redmires has been the need to provide clean drinking water to the people of Sheffield. The Cholera epidemic of 1832 claimed the lives of 402 people in the town highlighting the need for clean drinking water. The first reservoir at Redmires was constructed in 1836, with the second and third built in 1849 and 1854 respectively. The plantation, within which the filter house sits, was likely planted around the same time, appearing on an 1839 Ordnance Survey map.*

*Although it is not of traditional design, the low massing and position within the plantation results in a building that blends in with its landscape. Conversely the construction of a faux farmstead in a plantation would be an odd choice.*

*The design of the building has been described as utilitarian, but it unquestionably has architectural pretensions and is a good early example of post-war modernist architecture. The blocky form of the building gives the appearance of strength and monumentality befitting of a utilities building. The imposing fenestration and ornate datestone clearly display a sense of confidence on the part of the water company.*

*I would recommend that the building is retained, and an alternative use for the building is found. Any conversion should respect the character of the building, this includes the external appearance and the sense of openness within the interior tank and filter rooms.”*

23. PDNPA Archaeology: No archaeological concerns.

24. PDNPA Tree Officer: No objection subject to conditions.

25. Carry out all conditions as per Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Arboricultural Method Statement August 2023 to include mitigation. The removal of the low quality trees T28, T29, T30, T42 and T43 can be mitigated through the planting of a minimum of 5no. Standard replacement trees and through a scheme of long term woodland management

**Representations**

26. We have received no representations.

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## **Main Policies**

27. Relevant Core Strategy policies: GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, GSP4, L1, L2, L3, DS1, HC1, CC1, T3, T7.
28. Relevant Development Management policies: DMC1, DMC2, DMC3, DMC11, DMC12, DMC13, DMH6 and DMT3.

## **National Planning Policy Framework**

29. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27 March 2012. It was last updated in September 2023. 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 those in the Development Management DPD adopted in May 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 more recent Government guidance in the NPPF.
30. 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."
31. Paragraph 120 of the NPPF states that "*Planning policies and decisions should:*
  - (a) *encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside;*
  - (b) *recognise that some undeveloped land can perform many functions, such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, cooling/shading, carbon storage or food production;*
  - (c) *give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;*
  - (....)(d) and (e) omitted, not relevant).
32. Paragraph 78 says 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, and consider whether allowing some market housing on these sites would help to facilitate this. Paragraph 79 states that to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.
33. The National Planning Policy Framework encourages innovative modern design, in paragraph 80, which states:

*"80. Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:*

- (a) there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;*
- (b) the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;*
- (c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;*
- (d) the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential building; or*
- (e) the design is of exceptional quality, in that it:*
  - is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and*
  - would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area”*

34. Paragraph 134 of the Framework says that in determining applications significant weight should be given to:

*“(a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents which use visual tools such as design guides and codes; and/or*

*(b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings”.*

35. With regard to Habitats and Diversity, paragraph 180 of the NPPF is relevant to this application:

*180. “When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles: a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused; b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest; c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity”.*

#### Peak District National Park Core Strategy

36. 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). GSP1 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.

37. Policy GSP2: Enhancing the National Park states that:

- Opportunities for enhancing the valued characteristics of the National Park will be identified and acted upon.



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- Proposals intended to enhance the National Park will need to demonstrate that they offer significant overall benefit to the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area.
  - When development is permitted, a design will be sought that respects the character of the area.
  - Opportunities will be taken to enhance the National Park by the treatment or removal of undesirable features or buildings. Work must be undertaken in a manner which conserves the valued characteristics of the site and its surroundings.
  - Development in settlements necessary for the treatment, removal or relocation of nonconforming uses to an acceptable site, or which would enhance the valued characteristics of the National Park will be permitted.
38. 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.
39. Policy GSP4 says that to aid the achievement of its spatial outcomes, the National Park Authority will consider the contribution that a development can make directly and/or to its setting, including, where consistent with government guidance, using planning conditions and planning obligations.
40. Policy DS1 sets out the Development Strategy for the National Park.
41. Policy HC1C says:  
*“In accordance with core policies GSP1 and GSP2:*  
*I. it is required in order to achieve conservation and/or enhancement of valued vernacular or listed buildings; or*  
*II. it is required in order to achieve conservation or enhancement in settlements listed in core policy DS1.*  
*Any scheme proposed under CI or CII that is able to accommodate more than one dwelling unit, must also address identified eligible local need and be affordable with occupation restricted to local people in perpetuity...”*
42. Policy L1 *Landscape character and valued characteristics* states 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.
43. Policy L2 states that development must conserve and enhance any sites or features of geodiversity importance, and any sites, features or species of biodiversity importance and where appropriate their settings. For international and national sites the relevant legislation and protection will apply in addition to the requirements of policy. As set out in Core Strategy policy L2, the granting of planning permission is restricted for development likely to significantly affect a European (International) site, requiring that an appropriate assessment is first carried out of the implications of the development for the site’s conservation objectives. Primary legislation restricts the cases in which exceptional circumstances may justify development, particularly development having a significant effect on the ecological objectives or integrity of a Special Protection Area (classified under the Birds Directive) or Special Area of Conservation (designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive).

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44. Policy L3 *Cultural heritage assets of archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic significance* states that:
- A. 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 or special interest;
  - B. 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 of archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic significance or its setting, including statutory designations or other heritage assets of international, national, regional or local importance or special interest;
  - C. Proposals for development will be expected to meet the objectives of any strategy, wholly or partly covering the National Park, that has, as an objective, the conservation and where possible the enhancement of cultural heritage assets. This includes, but is not exclusive to, the Cultural Heritage Strategy for the Peak District National Park and any successor strategy
45. Policy CC1 states that development must make the most efficient and sustainable use of land, buildings and natural resources, taking into account the energy hierarchy and achieving the highest possible standards of carbon reductions and water efficiency.
46. CC5 C says that development which increases roof and hard surface area must include adequate measures such as Sustainable Drainage Systems to deal with the run-off of surface water. Such measures must not increase the risk of a local water course flooding.

#### Development Management Policies

47. The most relevant development management policies are DMC1, DMC2, DMC3, DMC11, DMC12, DMC13, DMT3.
48. Policy DMC3A 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.
49. Policy DMC3B 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.
50. 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 proposed 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.
51. Policy DMC10 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 (such changes include enlargement, subdivision, other alterations, and major rebuilding); and the building is capable of conversion; the changes brought about by the new use and any associated infrastructure conserves or enhances significance and landscape character; and the new use will not be visually intrusive in its landscape or have an

adverse impact on tranquillity, dark skies or other valued characteristics.

52. DMH6 allows for the re-development of previously development land for housing if it conserves and enhances the valued character of the built environment or landscape on, or adjacent to the site. Paragraph 6.97 of the supporting text to DMH6 says that outside of designated settlements and away from other forms of built development, applications for housing will be assessed against policies DS1 and GSP2.
53. Policies DMC11 and DMC12 require applications to include sufficient information to enable an assessment of impact upon designated sites and protected species. Development must conserve and enhance protected sites and species unless there are exceptional circumstances.
54. Policy DMC13 says that planning applications should provide sufficient information to enable impact on trees, woodlands and other landscape features to be properly considered. Development should incorporate existing trees and hedgerows which positively contribute which should be protected during the course of the development.
55. Policy DMT3 emphasises the importance of safe access to developments.

56. Design Guide

At paragraph 2.15 the Design Guide acknowledges that it is not easy to introduce modern architecture successfully into an area of traditional styles, and advises on use of local materials and good quality workmanship. In paragraph 2.18 it goes on to say that *'it is preferable to find a design solution which reflects or reinterprets the local tradition and is also a product of our time....New modern buildings often fail in design terms when their designers are more intent on current architectural fashion than respecting the context they are working within'*.

The Design Guide states that *"...there are still some basic principles that need to be respected if the new is to harmonise successfully with the old. These relate to the three main characteristics of traditional elevations:*

- *A balance of proportions between the overall shape of the walls and the openings they contain.*
- *A high solid to void ratio in which the wall dominates.*
- *A simple arrangement of openings, usually formal (often symmetrical) in the case of houses, and informal in the case of outbuildings".*

## **Assessment**

### **Principle of proposed development**

57. The application site is located in open countryside where our housing policies would not normally support the erection of new build open-market housing, other than in exceptional circumstances, as set out in policy HC1 of the Core Strategy.
58. HC1C says that development which is required in order to achieve conservation and/or enhancement of valued vernacular or listed buildings or is required in order to achieve conservation or enhancement in settlements listed in core policy DS1 may be acceptable in principle.
59. DM policy DMH6 does not restrict such development to within settlements, permitting the redevelopment of previously development land for housing if it conserves and enhances the valued character of the built environment or landscape on, or adjacent to the site. Paragraph 6.97 of the supporting text to DMH6 says that outside of designated

settlements and away from other forms of built development, applications for housing will be assessed against policies DS1 and GSP2.

Whether the existing building is a non-designated heritage asset that should be conserved through an alternative use

60. The planning history is a key material consideration in dealing with the current application. The report on the previous application in 2022 to convert the building into nine units of self-contained accommodation is an important starting point as it has led the applicants and their architect to develop a scheme which is for demolition of the existing building and the erection of new-build dwellings. What the report said on that application in respect of the existing building is important:

*“Our Development Management Policies at para 3.30 provide the definition of a traditional building for the purposes of the development plan. It explains these pre-date 1919 and in the National Park, traditional buildings usually have pitched roofs covered in slate or another natural roofing material, typically stone.*

*The Filter House building is of poor character and appearance and doesn't meet our definition of a traditional building in terms character, design or detail and it also significantly post dates 1919. Therefore, we do not consider the building to be worthy of conversion, as it's not a traditional building of historic or vernacular merit as required by Core Strategy Policy RT2. It is an unattractive functional building which in general detracts from its setting.*

*Whilst we appreciate that a heritage statement has been submitted to explain its origins and significance, we also do not consider that this overcomes the conflict with policy; being that this is not a traditional building and therefore RT2 has no provision for the conversion as proposed.*

*The building is essentially not a traditional building and not worthy of conversion as envisaged by our Design Guide SPD”.*

61. Whilst informal Planning Officer advice is given on a “without prejudice” basis, previous applications are important considerations for applicants, planning officers and the Planning Committee. It should be noted (see above) that both the Authority's Planning Policy Officer and the Building Conservation Officer have advised that the existing building could be considered to be a non-designated heritage asset.
62. Both recognise that the building is not a typical Peak District vernacular building, being a large flat-roofed structure faced with brick and with a concrete roof. However, it does represent a particular phase in the water-gathering history of this part of the National Park and clearly has some value in those terms. It has strong functional and utilitarian character, but with some detailing that is representative of this post-war period. The fact that it is post 1919 does not, in itself, mean that it is of no architectural or historic merit.
63. Water gathering and treatment is an important part of the National Park's history, particularly in the valleys to the north-west and north-east of the National Park. There are other former water treatment works in the National Park but they are largely pre-war and they use materials which are more typical of the National Park, for example the former works at Low Bradfield, Ladybower reservoir and Kinder reservoir. The recently converted works at Glossop, on the other hand, are post-war.
64. Drawing these considerations together, it is accepted that the former treatment works can be considered as non-designated heritage assets representative of the water gathering history of this part of the National Park. This is a starting point for assessing any applications to either convert the building or to demolish then and redevelop the site, but it does not in itself determine the outcome.

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65. There is also a need to consider other matters such as enhancement, the physical condition of the building, and the nature of the proposals for new buildings. This is a balanced decision, but one which must take account of the 2022 decision for conversion of the existing building. Consequently, it is considered that the principle of replacing the existing building is acceptable, given the scale, design and condition of the building
66. Given the scale and condition of the existing building, the site is considered to be previously developed land as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework. Development Management Policy DMH6 states that re-development of previously developed land for housing is acceptable in principle provided that it conserves and enhances the valued character of the built environment or landscape.
67. The supporting text to policy DMH6 states that applications for housing on previously developed land in the open countryside will also be assessed against policies DS1 and GSP2. Policy DS1 is our development strategy and directs the majority of new housing to Bakewell and the named settlements. For sites in the countryside DS1C allows for the conversion or change of use for housing or other development and alternative uses needed to secure effective conservation and enhancement. GSP2 sets detailed criteria to consider enhancement proposals against, including the need for development to offer “significant overall benefit to the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area”.
68. Paragraph 120 of the NPPF states, amongst other things, that planning policies and decisions should *“give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land”*.
69. The key issue therefore is the impact of the proposed development and whether it would achieve significant overall benefit to the valued characteristics of the National Park to justify the erection of three new market dwellings in this location.
70. In these circumstances the existing building is considered to be a structure which is becoming increasingly derelict and vandalised and that this is something which could be addressed through planning permission for redevelopment. Consequently it is considered that new dwellings on the site could be justified under policies GSP2, HC1 or DMH6 as it falls within the definition of brownfield or previously developed land.

#### Whether the proposed redevelopment would achieve an enhancement of the site

71. As noted above, the site sits between Redmires Road and Redmires Lower Reservoir, within a well-wooded area. The former treatment works is not visible from outside the site, other than from the footpath and concession path which runs past the access point at the western end. The existence of a large derelict and increasingly vandalised building is evident from these vantage points.
72. The site is also open to unauthorised access and has been vandalised since it became redundant; it is potentially dangerous to any intruders, whatever their motivation for entering the site. Consequently, whilst the building does not have a detrimental impact on the wider landscape, it is accepted that significant enhancement could be achieved through redevelopment. The building is of a scale where a “do nothing” approach is not considered to be acceptable or consistent with the NPPF.
73. As noted in the proposal section, the overall footprint and volume of buildings would be reduced by the scheme. There is a requirement to retain an access through the site for Yorkshire Water to access the substation at the eastern end, and there are also constraints on the layout because of the location of a pipeline and electricity cables

through the site.

74. The scheme proposes three open market dwellings with no affordable local needs dwellings. The application has not been supported by a financial viability report, but there are clearly some significant costs that will be incurred in removing the existing building and associated infrastructure so it is reasonable to assume that the scheme would not justify a contribution to affordable local needs housing. In the pre-application discussions the Planning Officer acknowledged that this is not an appropriate location for affordable local needs housing.
75. The applicant has provided a more detailed breakdown of the costs for the proposed development and the anticipated sale values of the houses. Whilst this is not a full financial viability assessment, it does provide enough information to support the conclusion that the development is unlikely to support the provision of affordable houses, either on site or through a commuted sum and that this scale of redevelopment is the minimum number required to achieve the necessary enhancement. The figures show an acquisition and build cost of just over £2.4 million, including site acquisition, legal and professional costs, and demolition of the existing building and erection of the new dwellings. The gross development value of the proposed scheme is estimated to be £2.87 million, giving an estimated profit of around £432,000, a profit margin of 17.7%. This is within the accepted margin of 20%.

#### Design Considerations

76. The proposal is for new three dwellings, following a “farm group” design approach, with a farmhouse and two “converted barns”. Whilst the proposed design does not completely copy the local building tradition for farmhouses and barns, it is generally of a scale, massing, layout and design that would be acceptable on this site if the principle of new development is acceptable. The scheme follows informal advice given by the Planning Officer following refusal of the previous application.
77. Since submission of the application revisions to the design have been agreed with the architect and applicant to provide a less suburban development. The key changes are the addition of a single storey lean-to on the barn-like building closet to the entrance to provide a tighter layout and some variation between the two “barn conversions”, a small lean-to on the gable of the farmhouse dwelling, the replacement of the flat-roof on the rear extension on the farmhouse with a more traditional pitched roof, linking the two “barn conversions” with a single roof to avoid the appearance of two identical detached dwellings, plus a number of amendments to door and window openings and the detached garage. These revisions are considered to improve the scheme and would avoid it having the appearance of a suburban cul-de-sac.
78. During the course of this application, possible alternative design approaches have been considered, such as one which seeks to reflect the water infrastructure history of the site or one which is a more contemporary appearance. However, the informal pre-application advice encouraged an approach which reflects a farm grouping and the applicant and his architect has opted to retain this approach.

#### Impact upon biodiversity

79. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Tree Survey have been submitted with the application. Natural England have no objection to the application and the Authority’s Tree Officer has no objection to the removal of five low quality trees subject to the planting of a minimum of five Standard replacement trees and through a scheme of long term woodland management. It is therefore considered that, subject to conditions, the impact of the proposed development on biodiversity and trees can be addressed through

conditions.

### Sustainable building and climate change

80. Policy CC1 and the NPPF require development to make the most efficient and sustainable use of land, buildings and natural resources, take account of the energy hierarchy and achieve the highest possible standards of carbon reductions and water efficiency. The application provides a Climate Change Statement. The statement sets out how the proposed dwellings would meet the requirements of policy CC1 and our adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance 'Climate Change and Sustainable Building'.
81. The Statement explains that the proposals incorporate a "fabric first" approach aiming for a high thermal performance and airtightness. The scheme will meet the latest thermal performance regulations. The statement also says that solar thermal panels would be mounted to the south facing roofs of each unit to use heat water for storage in a cylinder and low energy LED light fittings would be used throughout. Electric car charging facilities will be installed. The statement also sets out other details which would help to make the new buildings sustainable in terms of energy use. The proposal is considered to meet the requirements of policy CC1 in these respects.

### Impact on amenity

82. Given the relative separation of the site from other dwellings, the proposal does not give rise to any residential amenity issues in terms of overlooking, overshadowing or loss of privacy. The site shares its access with the nearby dwellings, but given the previous use of the site as a water treatment works, the replacement of the existing building with three dwellings is not considered to give rise to any concerns about the scale of vehicular use of the access.
83. The fact that the site has been heavily vandalised and has been subject to anti-social behaviour is a consideration, as its removal would be beneficial to the privacy and amenity of the nearby dwellings. The proposal therefore accords with policies GSP3 and DMC3 in these respects.

### Highway issues

84. The access to the site from Redmires Road is via an access which served the water treatment works and the associated houses, which are now in private ownership. The access point is also a public right of way, which then continues beyond the site, following a public footpath and a concession path granted by Yorkshire Water.
85. The Highway Authority has not responded at the time of writing this report, but given the previous use of the site it is unlikely that the replacement of the existing building with three dwellings would raise any highway safety concerns.

### Flood Risk

86. The site itself is located within the Environment Agency's (EA) Flood Zone 1 which means that the likelihood of river flooding is low, although the main site access, away from the development, crosses Flood Zones 2 and 3. A Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted with the application and the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and the Environment Agency do not object to the application, subject to conditions.

### Conclusion

87. The application proposes the erection of three new dwelling on the site of a former water

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treatment works. There is a presumption against development in this location unless there are exceptional circumstances which justify approval. Whilst the building is of some significance in terms of the water gathering and treatment history of the area, it is of a utilitarian design and appearance and is in a poor physical condition. As such it is considered to be a brownfield site, the development of which would be in accordance with local and national policies. For the reasons set out above, it is considered that the proposal is in accordance with Core Strategy policies GSP1, GSP2, DS1, HC1, L1 and DMP policy DMH6.

### **Human Rights**

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

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

89. Nil

90. Report Author: John Scott, Consultant Planner