

**11. FULL APPLICATION – CHANGE OF USE OF BARN TO HOLIDAY LET, AND ERECTION OF SINGLE STOREY LEAN-TO EXTENSION ON NORTHERN GABLE AT BARN TO THE SOUTH OF HOLE CARR FARM, LONGNOR (NP/SM/1123/1403) (PM)**

**APPLICANT: MR GEORGE SHERRATT**

**Summary**

1. Planning permission is sought for the change of use of a barn to a holiday let including the erection of a single storey extension.
2. The barn is located approximately 3.5 km to the west of Longnor along Leek Road and is set back approximately 60 metres from the public highway.
3. It is considered that the hard surfacing of the access track, creation of a car parking area, domestic paraphernalia and lighting associated with the proposed use of the barn as a holiday let would cause significant harm to the landscape character of the area.
4. The public benefits arising from the development would not outweigh the harm that has been identified and therefore it is recommended that planning permission is refused.

**Site and Surroundings**

5. The application site is located in open countryside on the north side of Leek Road which runs between Longnor and the A53 at Royal Cottage. The site is located approximately 3.5 km west of Longnor.
6. The application site consists of a two-storey stone-built small field barn consisting of a single bay. It was likely used for cattle housing and with the storage of fodder crops over, allowing the management of livestock away from the main farmstead. It was in existence by the late 19th century when it appears on historic mapping.
7. The barn is set back approximately 60 metres from Leek Road. An existing access track leads to the barn from Leek Road through a field gate.
8. The building is in a state of disrepair having lost its roof within the last 15 years, and part of the south eastern corner of the building has subsequently collapsed.
9. The barn is not listed and is not within a conservation area. As a historic vernacular building the barn is considered to constitute a non-designated heritage asset.
10. The surrounding landscape is defined as falling within the upland pastures landscape character type within the wider south west peak landscape character area. The landscape is permanent pasture with dry stone walls and some scattered mature trees.
11. Land immediately to the north of the application site is defined as falling within the designated Natural Zone as defined by the authority's core strategy. Land falling within a defined Special Protection Area (SPA) (South Pennine Moors Phase 1) and a SSSI (Leek Moors) is located approximately 400 metres to the north west of the application site.
12. A public footpath shares the access track to the barn and passes along the western side of the barn before descending into the valley to the north. A further public right of way runs 300 metres to the east of the site. Another public right of way runs along the top of Blackstone Edge approximately 200 metres to the west of the barn.

13. The nearest properties to the site are Hocker Farm located approximately 200 metres to the south and Little Hocker located approximately 150 metres to the south west.

### **Proposal**

14. Planning permission is sought for the change of use of the barn to a holiday let, and the erection of a single storey lean-to extension to the northern gable of the barn.
15. As the building is in a state of disrepair it will be necessary to re-roof the barn and rebuild the south eastern corner of the barn.
16. A new stone wall is proposed to the south of the barn to form a tight curtilage with hard paving proposed to the east and south of the barn. The existing access track would be laid with hard surfacing, and 2 parking spaces for vehicles would be created to the south of the turning area.
17. A package treatment plant is proposed to be installed within the site for foul sewage.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**That the application be REFUSED for the following reason:**

- 1. The hard surfacing of the access track, creation of a car parking area, domestic paraphernalia and lighting associated with the proposed use of the barn as a holiday let would cause significant harm to the landscape character of the area, contrary to Core Strategy Policies GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, L1, L3 and RT2, Development Management Plan policies DMC3 and DMC10 and the National Planning Policy Framework. The public benefits arising from the development would not outweigh the harm that has been identified.**

### **Key Issues**

18. The principle of the conversion to a holiday let; the impact upon character and significance of the heritage asset; the impact upon the setting of the barn and wider landscape character; the impact upon residential amenities; the impact upon ecology and protected species, the impact upon highway safety and climate change mitigation.

### **History**

19. 2021 – Application ref NP/SM/0221/0162 - Barn conversion to holiday let with extensions to side and rear – Application withdrawn.

### **Consultations**

20. PDNPA Archaeology – (Summarised comments).

The barn is a non-designated heritage asset of local significance. Its core significance lies in its archaeological, historic and architectural interest: Its archaeological interest lies in its surviving historic fabric which has the potential to retain evidence and information about its past use and development. There is no known below ground archaeological interest beyond that related to the building itself. Its historic interest lies in its form, layout, its materials, its stonework; its external elevations, the size, location and relationship between the historic apertures which are the key to legibility of the building's historic function. Its architectural interest lies in its traditional materials, its vernacular form and agricultural character which is evidence of its historic use and function, and a reflection of the development of both farming practices and the landscape.

Its landscape setting makes a positive contribution to its significance, particularly the relationship to the neighbouring farmsteads, field barns and outfarms and to its fieldscape. The scheme has been significantly revised since the previous application, including a reduction in the number and size of proposed extension, reduction in new openings and removal of rooflights. The curtilage has also been reduced in size and reconfigured. The scheme is now a small single storey side extension, and one new window opening – both are contrary to the guidance in the conversion design guide that buildings be converted in their shell and ideally without new openings. The proposed new opening is a pitching hole opening in the side elevation, mirroring that in the other side elevation of the building and in terms of size and form it is not out of keeping with this kind of structure and would not harm the character of the building but does represent a departure from its historic form and a loss of historic fabric.

Overall, the proposed development represents minor harm to a heritage asset of local significance. Should the scheme reach a point that it is considered to be acceptable with respect to the planning balance, the then harm to the significance of the heritage asset needs to be addressed by a conditioned scheme of building recording and archaeological monitoring (structural watching brief).

21. Heathlee Parish Council – Supports the application with the following comments:

- The existing footpath should remain as is.
- The Parish Council would prefer this building to be made into a permanent residence rather than another holiday cottage.
- It should be noted that a neighbour's water supply runs through the field. There is a new water meter belonging to Severn Trent which is also located in the area of the planning application. The planning application and subsequent works should not affect the current water supply to neighbours.
- Has failure of the water treatment system for the application been considered and the impact that that may have?

22. Staffordshire Moorlands District Council – No response received.

23. Staffordshire County Council Highways – No objection subject to conditions requiring parking and turning areas to be in place prior to the development being brought into use and requiring the driveway to be surfaced in a hard-bound material for a minimum distance of 5 metres back from the site boundary.

### **Representations**

24. No representations have been received.

### **Main Policies**

25. Core Strategy: GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, DS1, L1, L2, L3, RT2, CC1

26. Development Management Policies: DM1, DMC3, DMC5, DMC10, DMC11, DMT3

### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

27. In the National Park, the Development Plan comprises the Authority's Core Strategy 2011 and the Development Management Policies (DMP), adopted May 2019. These Development Plan Policies provide a clear starting point consistent with the National Park's statutory purposes for the determination of this application. In this case, it is considered there are no significant conflicts between prevailing policies in the Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

28. National Park designation is the highest level of landscape designation in the UK. The Environment Act 1995 sets out two statutory purposes for national parks in England and Wales: These are; to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage and promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of national parks by the public. When national parks carry out these purposes they also have the duty to; seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Park.
29. Paragraph 182 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.

### Core Strategy

30. 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 conservation and enhancement of the National Park’s landscape and its natural and heritage assets.
31. 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.
32. DS1 - Development Strategy. Sets out the forms of development that are acceptable in principle in all settlements and in the countryside outside of the Natural Zone.
33. L1 identifies that development must conserve and enhance valued landscape character and valued characteristics, and other than in exceptional circumstances, proposals in the Natural Zone will not be permitted.
34. L2 – Development must conserve and enhance sites, features or species of biodiversity importance and their setting. Development likely to have an adverse impact on any of the above, that have statutory designation or are of international or national importance for their biodiversity, will not be permitted other than in exceptional circumstances.
35. L3 requires that development must conserve and where appropriate enhance or reveal significance of archaeological, artistic or historic assets and their setting, including statutory designation and other heritage assets of international, national, regional or local importance or special interest.
36. RT2 allows for the change of use of traditional buildings of historic or vernacular merit to self-catering holiday accommodation except where it would create unacceptable landscape impact in open countryside.
37. CC1 states that development must make the most efficient and sustainable use of land, buildings and natural resources. Development must also achieve the highest possible standards of carbon reductions.

### Development Management Policies

38. DM1 - When considering development proposals, the National Park Authority will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (2012). It will work proactively with applicants to find solutions that are consistent with National Park purposes: (i) to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park; and (ii) to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the valued characteristics of the National Park.
39. DMC3 - requires development to be of a high standard that respects, protects, and where possible enhances the natural beauty, quality and visual amenity of the landscape, including the wildlife and cultural heritage that contribute to the distinctive sense of place. It also provides further detailed criteria to assess design and landscaping, as well as requiring development to conserve the amenity of other properties.
40. DMC5 - Heritage assets include both designated and non-designated heritage assets. This policy states planning applications must consider the significance of any heritage asset. Including the extent of any harm to, or loss of, the significance, character and appearance of a heritage asset. The supporting evidence must be proportionate to the significance of the asset. It may be included as part of a Heritage Statement or Design and Access Statement where relevant. If applicants fail to provide adequate or accurate detailed information to show the effect of the development on the significance, character and appearance of the heritage asset and its setting, the application will be refused.
41. DMC10 –addresses conversion of heritage assets, permitting this where the new use would conserve its character and significance, and where the new use and associated infrastructure conserve the asset, its setting, and valued landscape character. It also notes that new uses or curtilages should not be visually intrusive in the landscape or have an adverse impact on tranquillity, dark skies, or other valued characteristics.
42. DMC11 Safeguarding, recording and enhancing nature conservation interests. Proposals should aim to achieve net gains to biodiversity or geodiversity as a result of development. Details of appropriate safeguards and enhancement measures for a site, feature or species of nature conservation importance must be provided in line with the Biodiversity Action Plan. For all sites, features and species development proposals must consider amongst other things, the setting of the development in relation to other features of importance, historical and cultural.
43. DMT3 - a safe vehicular access should be provided in a way that does not detract from the character and appearance of the locality and where possible enhances it.

### Supplementary Planning Documents

44. Peak District National Park Authority Design Guide (2007): The Design Guide states that, when considering a conversion, the building in question should be of sufficient historic or architectural merit to warrant its conversion. Factors such as location, size and character of the building and its means of access will all be assessed. 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.
45. Peak District National Park Conversion of Traditional Buildings SPD (2022): The SPD provides detailed guidance on the principles to be considered when proposing the conversion of traditional buildings. This is set out as 6 key principles: 1. Understanding the building and its setting 2. Working with the existing form and character 3. Following

a conservation approach 4. Creating responsive new design 5. Using appropriate materials and detailing. 6. Conserving and enhancing the setting.

### **Assessment**

#### **The principle of the conversion to a holiday let.**

46. Core strategy policy RT2 states that the change of use of a traditional building of historic or vernacular merit to service or self-catering holiday accommodation will be permitted except where it would create unacceptable landscape impact in open countryside.
47. The barn is a traditional historic building of vernacular merit. The barn is a non-designated heritage asset of local significance. Its core significance lies in its archaeological, historic and architectural interest.
48. Therefore, it is considered that in principle the proposed conversion to a holiday let accords with policy RT2 and is acceptable in principle subject to the proposal not harming the significance of the heritage asset or the surrounding landscape character, issues which are assessed below.

#### **The impact upon character and significance of the heritage asset**

49. Policy DMC10 requires that the conversion of heritage assets conserves and enhances the character, setting and significance of the heritage asset.
50. The scheme has been significantly revised since the previous application (which was withdrawn in 2021) including a reduction in the number and size of proposed extensions, a reduction in new openings and the removal of proposed rooflights. The curtilage has also been reduced in size and reconfigured. The scheme now proposes a small single storey extension, and one new window opening. Both elements are contrary to the guidance in the conversion design guide that buildings be converted in their shell and ideally without new openings.
51. The proposed new opening is a pitching hole opening in the side elevation, mirroring that in the other side elevation of the building and in terms of size and form it is not out of keeping with this kind of structure and would not harm the character of the building but does represent a departure from its historic form and a loss of historic fabric.
52. Overall, the proposed extension and alterations would result in minor harm to a heritage asset of local significance. In reaching a decision this harm needs to be balanced against public benefits accruing from the scheme which will be considered in the Planning Balance section towards the end of this report.
53. The submitted structural report outlines areas of the barn which require rebuilding. These comprise part of the internal face of the front elevation, the corner between the front elevation and left-hand side elevation, three quarters of the left-hand gable elevation, the first floor and the roof. New foundations are also required for the rebuilt sections. The authority's archaeologist notes that whilst the rebuilding is required to secure the building structurally, it does represent a loss of historic fabric and reduction of the historic interest of the structure.
54. The submitted structural report is dated December 2020 and is therefore more than three years old. It is possible therefore that additional rebuilding of the barn could be required should the structural condition of the barn have deteriorated further since 2020.

55. Should planning permission be granted for the proposal, then the level of rebuilding permitted would be that shown in the submitted structural report. The structural report does not include a drawing showing the extent of rebuilding proposed (the extent of rebuilding proposed is described in written form). Should planning permission be granted it is considered reasonable and necessary to impose a condition requiring a drawing showing the extent of rebuilding proposed to be submitted to the authority, for the avoidance of doubt so that all parties are clear on the exact extent of rebuilding permitted.

#### Impact upon setting of the barn and wider landscape character

56. The existing barn appears isolated within the surrounding landscape, being located approximately 60 metres from the public highway. The surrounding landscape is largely open in character with limited vegetation. Long distance views are possible within the environs of the barn and the potential for views is exacerbated by the undulating topography with higher land located both to the east and west of the application site.
57. It is accepted that domestic paraphernalia is likely to be more limited for a holiday let than for a dwelling. Indeed, the converted barn would have a small area of outside amenity space with a tightly defined curtilage bounded by stone walls. These new stone walls would read as an extension to the existing stone walls in the vicinity and would therefore help to reduce the impact of the curtilage itself upon the surrounding landscape character.
58. However, it is also necessary to consider the impact of the hard surfaced access track including the hard surfacing for the car parking area, the impact of activity including car parking, the impact of lighting and the impact of domestic paraphernalia within the curtilage upon the landscape character of the surrounding area.
59. When viewed from the public highway in the vicinity of the access to the barn, the proposed curtilage and car parking area would not be prominent, with the car parking area located at a slightly lower level than the barn and road. However, the road climbs both to the east and west of this location and therefore from these more elevated positions there would be clear views of the converted barn and the surrounding curtilage, access track and car parking area.
60. Additionally, public rights of way within the surrounding landscape would offer sustained and elevated views of the converted barn including the curtilage, car parking area and access track including to users of the public right of way along Blackstone Edge when travelling south (located to the west of the application site) and to users of the public footpath descending in a south westerly direction from Barrow Moor towards Leek Road (located to the east of the application site).
61. Overall, it is considered that the cumulative impacts of the hard surfacing, domestic activity including domestic paraphernalia and lighting would result in a significant adverse impact upon the wider landscape. Accordingly, the proposal is considered contrary to Development Plan policies GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, L1, L3, RT2 and DMC10 and the NPPF.

#### Impact upon Residential Amenities

62. The proposed conversion would have no impact upon the residential amenities of neighbouring occupiers. Additionally, there would be an acceptable standard of residential amenity for future occupiers of the converted barn as a holiday let.

### Impact upon Ecology and Protected Species

63. The barn currently does not have a roof and therefore the building is exempt from requiring submission of a protected species survey with the application. The building is therefore considered to have a very low likelihood of being used by bats and birds. As such, no mitigation is required to offset the loss of the barn as a roosting or nesting location.
64. Given the nature and scale of the proposed development and distance to nearby designated sites it is concluded that the development would not have any adverse impacts upon designated sites.

### Impact upon highway safety

65. Vehicular access to the converted barn would be provided using an existing vehicular access from Leek Road.
66. The highway authority has no objection to the use of this existing track to serve the proposed converted barn subject to the use of conditions requiring parking and turning areas to be in place prior to development being brought into use and requiring the driveway to be surfaced in a hard-bound material for a minimum distance of 5 metres back from the highway boundary.

### Climate Change mitigation

67. An Environmental Statement has been submitted with the application which sets out how the proposal will reduce the need for energy and use energy more efficiently. The measures outlined within the statement are considered sufficient to meet the requirements of policy CC1.

### Planning Balance

68. The significant public benefit of securing a long-term future use for a historic building of vernacular merit, a non-designated heritage asset is acknowledged and given appropriate weight within the planning balance.
69. The minor harm as a result of the proposed conversion to the significance of the non-designated heritage asset is noted. Were this the only identified harm it is likely that the public benefits of the scheme would outweigh this minor harm.
70. However, the proposed scheme would also result in a significant adverse impact upon the established landscape character of the area.
71. It is considered that this significant harm to the landscape outweighs the public benefits of the scheme.

### Conclusion

72. The hard surfacing of the access track, creation of a car parking area, domestic paraphernalia and lighting associated with the proposed use of the barn as a holiday let would cause significant harm to the established landscape character of the area, contrary to Core Strategy Policies GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, L1, L3 and RT2, Development Management Plan policies DMC3 and DMC10 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

73. The public benefits arising from the development would not outweigh the harm that has been identified. In the absence of any further material considerations it is therefore recommended that planning permission be refused

**Human Rights**

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

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

75. Nil

76. Report Author: Peter Mansbridge - Planner - South Area.