

12. FULL APPLICATION - FOR THE CHANGE OF USE FROM HOLIDAY LET TO DWELLING WITH SINGLE STOREY BEDROOM EXTENSION AT NIELD BANK BUNGALOW, BUXTON ROAD, QUARNFORD (NP/SM/0624/0601 GG)

APPLICANT: MRS. K. KIDD

Summary

1. The application is for the change of use from holiday let to dwelling with single storey bedroom extension.
2. The application is recommended for refusal as there has been no clear proposal for the dwelling to be an affordable dwellinghouse. In addition, the proposed extension would harm the character and appearance of the building and there are concerns with respect to the distance of the extension to conservatory to the neighbouring dwellinghouse and the potential for impact on privacy.

Site and Surroundings

3. The application building which is a holiday let, and the adjacent house also owned by the applicant and rented out privately, are in an isolated location in upland fields to the east of the A53. The nearest settlement to the site is Flash which is approximately 0.5 miles to the north west.
4. Access to the site is via a surfaced track of approximately 460m length from the gateway adjacent to the main road (A53). The access is a winding, single lane track which is steep in places and has a steep drop to the valley below. Close to the A53, the access road passes through an area of bell pits, which were a primitive method of mining minerals.
5. The definitive line of a public footpath (FP Hollinsclough 0.1762) runs between the dwellinghouse and the holiday let and joins with a public footpath immediately to the south (FP Hollinsclough 16).

Proposal

6. The proposal is to change of use of the building from a holiday let to dwelling, to include a single storey extension to provide for a further bedroom.

RECOMMENDATION:

7. **That the application be REFUSED for the following reasons:**
 1. **The proposed market dwelling is not required to achieve the conservation or enhancement of a valued vernacular or listed building and therefore is contrary in principle to Core Strategy policies DS1 and HC1.**
 2. **The proposed extension would harm the character and appearance of the existing building and the local area contrary to Core Strategy policies GSP2, GSP3, L1 and L3, Development Management policies DMC3, DMC5 and DMC10 and the Authority's adopted design guidance and conversions supplementary planning documents.**
 3. **The proposed development would introduce a window facing the existing neighbouring dwelling house. Intervesibility between these windows would result in harm to the residential amenity of the occupants of the neighbouring property**

and the proposed development contrary to Core Strategy policy GSP3 and Development Management policy DMC3.

Proposal

8. The change of use of the building to a market dwelling and a single storey extension to provide an additional bedroom.

Key issues

- Whether the change of use of the holiday accommodation to an open market dwellinghouse is acceptable in principle
- Whether the proposed change of use will impact on the character and appearance of the landscape
- Whether the extension will impact on the character and appearance of the building and the wider landscape setting
- Whether the amenity of occupiers of the neighbouring dwellinghouse will be impacted upon.

History

2003 - SM0903106 Conversion of redundant farm building to holiday cottage – Granted.

1994 - SM0594051 Formation of surfaced access track – Granted

Consultations

9. Staffordshire County Council (Highway Authority): No objection.
10. Staffordshire County Council (Public Rights of Way): No objection.
11. PDNPA Archaeology: No comment.
12. Parish Council:
 - unanimous in the support of the application
 - the applicant is a wise and well-established member of the community and, whilst recognising that this is not a material consideration, the proposals have been seriously considered by the applicant over a long period of time
 - commenced with the holiday accommodation 20 years ago when hidden deprivation in the countryside was being better understood – Flash was singled out as a case study for such in 1991
 - as a holiday let, could be considered a perfect hideaway location but economic success has only been partial
 - holiday let is typically closed to visitors between October and March due to altitude and weather conditions
 - has mainly attracted couples and a lot of effort and energy is expended in preparing the holiday for frequent changes in visitors
 - familiar with the Flash villagers' opinion that there are too many holiday lets
 - reflect on applicant's current circumstances
 - has the potential to become a permanent dwelling and with an additional bedroom it could meet a wider range of needs
 - potential to provide a home for someone in genuine need in the Parish
 - aware of local families striving to enable their young to remain in the local area

- young people across the Moorlands have a strong sense of place and identity and save hard to remain within it - aware that that they live in local towns but would like to return and would not be deterred by the building's isolation
- concepts of self-help and mutual support are tremendously strong in the Moorlands
- extension would be in harmony with the neighbouring property and would not have a negative impact on the landscape
- climate change statement is a thoughtful report
- with reference to page 15 of the Development Management Plan, the planning application would foster the economic, social and emotional wellbeing of the applicant and that of her extended family across the generations within the Moorland community.

Representations

13. During the consultation period, the Authority has received two formal representations from a resident of Flash and a resident of Upper Hulme who support the proposed development. The comments include:

- have witnessed changes in the village over the last thirty years
- applicant has made several properties available to rent over the years
- community severely affected by number of holiday lets and knock on effects
- school has closed and dwindling numbers attending church
- transient nature of holiday lets means vibrancy is lost and community spirit declines
- if there are not a proportion of people living in the National Park, then it becomes a less attractive place to visit
- already have an increasing number of day visitors which impacts on parking and access
- due to lack of residents have difficulty recruiting responders/helpers
- already have four campsites, numerous bunkhouses, holiday lets and AirB&B's in the area
- in 1990's four local houses built in Flash which shows local need for houses
- expansion of town and cities shows need for more houses
- why are residential units that are already available not being used as such rather than destroying areas with holiday lets and second homes
- now time to consider if the practice of attaching caveats to the use of properties as holiday accommodation is wise when people need to live in the village and what better way than to make available an existing property that simply can be given over to residential let.

Main Policies

14. Relevant Core Strategy policies: GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, CC1, CC5, L1, L3 and HC1

15. Relevant Local Plan policies: DM1, DMC1, DMC3, DMC5 & DM10

16. National Planning Policy Framework

Wider Policy Context

17. 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:

- Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage
- 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 parks.

National Planning Policy Framework

18. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) replaced a significant proportion of central government planning policy with immediate effect. A revised NPPF was published in December 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 policies in the Peak District National Park Development Management Policies document 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.
19. Paragraph 182 of the NPPF states that *'great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing 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 these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in all these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads.'*
20. Paragraph 84 clearly states that planning policies and decisions should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances such as:
 - (a) meeting an essential need;
 - (b) ensuring the longevity of a heritage asset by allowing a viable use;
 - (c) the development would re-use redundant buildings and enhance its setting;
 - (d) the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential building; or
 - (e) the design is of exceptional quality.
21. Paragraph 209 of the NPPF states that where the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Peak District National Park Core Strategy

22. GSP1 & GSP2 - *Securing National Park purposes and sustainable development & enhancing the National Park.* These policies set out the broad strategy for achieving the National Park's objectives, and jointly seek to secure national park legal purposes and duties through the conversion and enhancement of the National Park's landscape and its natural and heritage
23. GSP3 - *Development management principles.* This 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.

24. CC1 – *Climate change mitigation and adaptation*. This requires all development to make the most efficient and sustainable use of land, buildings and natural resources to achieve the highest possible standards of carbon reductions.
25. CC5 – *Flood risk and water conservation*. This advises 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.
26. L1 - *Landscape character and valued characteristics*. This states that all 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.
27. L3 - *Cultural heritage assets of archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic significance*. This states that development must conserve and where appropriate enhance or reveal the significance of architectural or historic assets and their settings.
28. HC1 - *New housing*. This states that provision will not be made for housing solely to meet an open market demand, and sets out the exceptional circumstances where new housing can be accepted in open countryside.

Local Plan Development Management Policies

29. DM1 - states that when considering development proposals, the National Park Authority will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development and work proactively with applicants to find solutions that are consistent with National Park purposes.
30. DMC3 - *Siting, design, layout and landscaping*. This states that where development is acceptable in principle, it will be permitted provided that its detailed treatment is of a high standard that respects, protects and where possible enhances the natural beauty, quality and visual amenity of the landscape, including the wildlife and cultural heritage that contribute to the distinctive sense of place.
31. DMC5 - *Assessing the impact of development on designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings*. This advises that applications for development affecting a heritage asset, which can include a non-designated heritage asset, must clearly demonstrate its significance and how features of value will be conserved and, where possible, enhanced and why the proposed development and related works are desirable or necessary. It is also advised 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 the asset and that the development is considered by the Authority to be acceptable following a balanced judgement that takes into account the significance of the non-designated heritage asset.
32. DMC10 – *Settlement limits*. DMC4 (B) states that development that is separated from existing settlements will not be permitted as it is likely to result in pressure to infill intervening gaps.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

33. The PDNPA Design Guide refers to the principles of good design and designing in harmony with the local building tradition. However, this must only be applied where a development is otherwise justified by other policy criteria.

34. The Conversion of Historic Buildings SPD is also relevant. It is appreciated that the barn has already been converted to a holiday let, but the parameters by which such buildings are permitted to be converted are nevertheless important in considering any proposals to extend them.

Assessment

Principle

35. The site is located in an isolated location in open countryside where policy HC1 of the Core Strategy states that provision will not be made for housing solely to meet open market demand. The building has been converted and is occupied as holiday accommodation and this use has conserved the building. There is therefore no requirement for the building to be used as a market dwelling.
36. The use of the building as a permanent dwelling therefore could only be acceptable where it is required to address eligible local needs or to provide accommodation for key workers in agriculture, forestry or other rural enterprises. This reflects national policy set out in paragraph 84 of the NPPF.
37. Whilst the applicant has advised that the dwellinghouse would provide for person(s) or a family to live locally to other family members the application is for a market dwelling not a local need affordable dwelling to meet local need. As such, the proposal fails to meet with the aim of Policy HC1(A) of the Core Strategy. In addition, whilst the Applicant advises that there is an over proliferation of holiday accommodation in the National Park, there is no evidence presented as to that being the case nor any evidence that the holiday accommodation is not viable.
38. The principle of the proposal is therefore contrary to the provisions of the development plan and national policy set out in the NPPF.
39. Officers have discussed the policy position with the agent and suggested consideration be given to re-submitting with an application for an affordable dwelling to meet local need, if this can be justified. However, the applicant has requested the application be determined as submitted.

Character and appearance

40. Whilst the site is in a relatively isolated location, it is situated at the junction of two public footpaths, one of which, according to the definitive map, runs between the application building and the adjacent dwellinghouse, albeit this footpath is not apparent on the ground. It also appears from the definitive map that the proposed extension may encroach over, or certainly be close to, this footpath and the development proposals would be highly visible from this public domain within the landscape.
41. The application building could be considered to be a non-designated heritage asset and it contributes to the landscape in association with the farmhouse and its isolated rural setting. Policy L1 of the Core Strategy advises that development must conserve and enhance valued landscape character and valued characteristics of the National Park. Policy L3 deals with cultural heritage assets of historic significance, and states that development must conserve and where appropriate enhance or reveal the significance of architectural or historic assets and their settings.

42. One of the key principles is that a conversion scheme should work with the existing form and character of the building. This is reflected upon in the Authority's Conversion of Historic Buildings SPD. Paragraph 5.7 advises that the existing form, scale and character of the historic building and its site will guide the design in any conversion scheme. Paragraph 5.8 adds that most farm buildings are generally simple and functional in their form, shape and design and use local materials and simple detailing. They typically have long and uninterrupted roofs and a higher ratio of blank walling to openings.
43. Given the above, it is considered that the extension proposed to the building would significantly harm its underlying character and appearance as a former traditional agricultural building. The building is of traditional materials and has a simple linear form and the proposal to create a L-shaped building would significantly harm that traditional character and appearance. Had such a proposal been put forward at the time at which the barn was converted to a holiday let, it is unlikely that this would have been acceptable, as is considered the case with the current proposal.
44. There are also matters of detail, such as the large window set in the gable end of the proposed extension which would serve to domesticate the appearance of the building, where such domestication is considered to be currently understated. It is appreciated that this could be addressed with the insertion of a more modest window, more typical of those in the existing building. However, the use of matching materials would also serve to suppress the original form of the building, to present a falsified/ fabricated appearance to the traditional building.
45. In addition to the above, the use as a dwellinghouse is more likely to have a more managed garden than is the case for the property being used as a holiday let; the garden is currently just managed grass with some areas of hardstanding. There is also the likelihood, if the building were used as a dwellinghouse, that domestic paraphernalia would become more evident; such interventions would serve to domesticate the setting of the building and erode the character and appearance of the natural landscape and it would be difficult to control and monitor such intrusions through conditions on any grant of planning permission.

Amenity Impacts

46. There is a dwellinghouse with conservatory windows facing towards the application building opposite. The dwellinghouse would be some 10m from the nearest window proposed in the extension to the application building. Whilst there is a slight change in levels between the two buildings, it is considered that the proposed interrelationship would lead to a greater impact on the amenity of occupiers of the existing dwellinghouse than currently exists, where the nearest facing window is smaller than that proposed in the extension and some 14m away. In addition, the existing window serves a bathroom rather than a bedroom as proposed.
47. The occupiers of the existing dwellinghouse could be currently impacted upon by users of the holiday let, but this would have likely have been to their knowledge when they chose to rent the property. Whilst permanent residents may not have the same impact as holiday makers, this may not necessarily be the case. In this regard, there are considered to be no significant benefits to having persons living in the building as opposed to visitors coming to the building, which would also be limited in the winter months as advised by the Applicant.

Highway Matters

48. The proposal would utilise an existing access and there is considered to be no highway safety concerns in using the building as a dwellinghouse instead of a holiday let given that each use could generate a similar level of comings and goings from the site by vehicles. Whilst familiarity with the access as a result of living in a dwellinghouse may be beneficial

compared to initial unfamiliarity with the access by users of it as a holiday let, the danger to human health has not been clearly evidenced or quantified and, in any event, this does not override the concerns detailed above.

Public Footpath

49. There would appear to be an impact on the definitive route of a public footpath. Staffordshire County Council (Public Rights of Way) has considered the application and advise that although the proposed extension is quite close, it wouldn't warrant a diversion under Section 257 of TCPA as it is deemed unnecessary for the development to proceed. However, it appears from aerial photography that Public Footpath Nos. 0.1762 and 16 Hollinsclough are both obstructed by boundary treatments, although it doesn't seem they will be further impacted by this development.
50. To this end, it is advised that this will be referred to one of the Rights of Way Officers to visit and it is requested, if planning permission be granted, that notes are attached to the decision notice advising of the definitive rights of way and that they should not be obstructed.

Sustainability

51. Policy CC1 requires development to make the most efficient and sustainable use of land, buildings and natural resources in order to build in resilience to and mitigate the causes of climate change. To this end, the Applicant has submitted a Climate Change Statement to address such matters.
52. The Applicant advises that the proposed alterations would be designed using a 'fabric first' approach, prioritising design and construction to improve thermal performance and reduce the need for energy. The proposed alterations would be designed and constructed to meet and exceed the current Building Regulations Part L requirements as follows:
 - all construction materials and finishes to have low environmental impact where possible.
 - all construction materials and finishes to be locally sourced where possible
 - all timber will be FSC certified
 - materials will be sourced as locally as possibly
 - energy efficient low-E glazing to be used.
 - construction labour to be sourced locally where practical to do so to avoid excessive journeys
 - achieving the highest possible standards of water efficiency in all development - the water supply to the existing bungalow is from a mains supply
 - low use, water-conserving fittings for taps and sanitaryware to be used throughout the development.
 - provide water butts to collect storm water from the roof for use watering plants, etc in the garden during summer months when rainfall is more infrequent.
 - install a water meter to help detect leaks and discourage waste.
53. The proposed extension would be built using a modern cavity wall construction, with concrete blocks to form the inner leaf, which will provide a heat buffer or thermal mass to store heat in the walls during winter. The roof of the proposed extension would be insulated to the standards of the current regulations to minimise heat escaping through the roof as it rises. The existing windows are uPVC units but could be replaced with a like-for-like design, modern gas filled double glazed alternative to match the units proposed to be installed in new window openings, in order to provide better thermal insulation. The proposed development would have a thermal efficiency that exceeds the minimum for building regulations and consideration to the fabric of the building will reduce the need for energy.

54. It is advised that an A rated LPG or oil-fired boiler can be installed to run a very efficient heating system and the whole building will be well air sealed to create an energy efficient dwelling. The property currently has storage type heaters for the lounge and kitchen, and warm air blowers for the kitchen and bathroom. Replacing these with a central heating system would be more economical to run. The property may benefit from the installation of a wood burning stove to provide heating from a renewable source.
55. As the proposed dwelling would be located in quite an isolated site, the Applicant considers that it wouldn't have many passers-by. In this respect, the Applicant believes that, whilst roof mounted PV panels can detract from the overall appearance of a property, in this instance they consider it unlikely to cause any issue. The building is orientated with the ridge running north/south, so it would need panels of both planes of the roof to maintain electricity generation throughout the day.
56. To this end, the Applicant advises that the construction of the extension would offer a south facing roof plane to provide a more consistent electricity supply. The use of air source heat pumps is an alternative to gas or oil in rural locations and are an economical source of heating. The rural location means that the power supply to the site may be limited and the electricity requirement for the heat pump may exceed what is available to the site without an expensive upgrade.
57. There are clear intentions to mitigate against climate change in the manner in which the building is proposed to be extended and adapted, to make it more energy efficient, and the measures suggested could be secured with conditions on any grant of planning permission.

Drainage and Flooding

58. The site is not within a flood risk zone and is on sloping ground which removes all risk of it flooding. Whilst additional roofscape is proposed, the run-off from such can be addressed through an appropriate SuDS system which would need to be Building Regulations compliant.

Conclusion

59. Justification can be made to convert buildings to dwellings where this would mean that their contribution to the landscape would be preserved and, when away from settlements, they can be needed to address local housing need. However, the building has already been successfully converted to use as a holiday let and there is no clear justification as to why this should now become an open market dwellinghouse.
60. Whilst there are clear intentions to address the carbon footprint of development, in the manner in which the building is proposed to be extended and adapted to mitigate against climate change, this does not override the physical harm proposed to a building that retains much of its traditional character and appearance. This harm would be of detriment in the wider landscape and very apparent to passers-by using the public footpath network.
61. The existing dwellinghouse would be some 10m from the nearest window proposed in the extension to the application building. Whilst there is a slight change in levels between the two buildings, it is considered that the proposed interrelationship would lead to a greater impact on the amenity of occupiers of the existing dwellinghouse than currently exists.
62. Given the above, it is considered that the proposals fail to meet with the strategic aims of local and national policies and in the absence of any further material considerations the application is recommended for refusal.

Human Rights

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

List of Background Papers (not previously published)

Nil

Report Author and Job Title

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