

6. FULL APPLICATION: PROPOSED CONVERSION AND EXTENSION OF FORMER TOILET BLOCK AND STORAGE GARAGE TO FORM ONE DWELLING WITH GARDEN, ACCESS, PARKING, LANDSCAPING AND EXTERNAL WORKS AT LOWER HOOLEYHEY FARM HOOLEYHEY LANE, LAMALOAD RESERVOIR, MACCLESFIELD FOREST. NP/CEC/0126/0077

APPLICANT: Mr Edward Chruszcz

Summary

1. The application has been brought to committee as a result of the Parish Council objection.
2. The proposal relates to two stone barns located to the NE of Lamaload Reservoir.
3. The principle of conversion to market dwelling was accepted in 2022 with a previous grant of permission. This was not implemented and as the permission lapsed in 2025, the current proposal seeks to reinstate that permission.
4. The conversion to a market dwelling is sensitive to the character and appearance of the barns and necessary to achieve conservation and enhancement of these non-designated heritage assets. It therefore accords with Development Plan Housing Policy HC1.
5. The proposed landscaping and restricted curtilage would conserve local landscape character as well as result in a net gain in Biodiversity of 15.2%.
6. There are no amenity concerns and there is suitable safe access to the highway.
7. The proposal is therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions.

Site and Surroundings

8. The site comprises two stone barns located in the open countryside, to the north east of Lamaload Reservoir and close to the Lamaload Reservoir Public Car Park.
9. The buildings comprise a two-storey barn and an adjacent smaller single storey barn. They are set back from the road approximately 60m and accessed via an existing vehicular gate and twin wheel track leading directly to the buildings. The track also carries a public footpath and continues on to serve other land beyond.
10. The barns are the only remaining buildings from the Lower Hooleyhey farmstead, an historic farmstead recorded in the Historic Environment Record, that was largely demolished in the 1960s to allow for the construction and use of the Lamaload Reservoir. They were previously converted for use as a public toilet and for storage connected with the use of the reservoir and the nearby public car park and picnic area. That use ceased some time ago and the buildings stand empty.
11. The red line application site comprises the buildings and their immediate curtilage along with the wider area of wooded land between the buildings and the car park totalling approximately 1.2 acres.
12. Whilst there is an existing natural stone boundary wall along the roadside, the buildings are mainly fenced from the adjacent open grazing land around the reservoir and sit at the edge of the wooded area which also partially screens them from the road which is at a higher level than the site.

13. To the north east of the site is the Lamaload Reservoir car park operated by United Utilities which provides parking to access the local footpath around the reservoir and wider local area.
14. The site is within the Southwest Peak Slopes, Valleys and Woodland Landscape area. The buildings are not listed, but are considered to be non-designated heritage assets.
15. Planning permission was granted for the conversion of the barns into a dwelling in 2022 but work never commenced and the consent lapsed in 2024.

Proposal

16. Full Planning permission is sought to convert the barns into a single dwelling based on the same plans as the 2022 approval. The larger two storey barn would form the main 3-bedroom dwellinghouse.
17. The smaller detached barn would form one further bedroom and en-suite as ancillary accommodation. An extension to the east gable would create a small stone-built plant room/storage space. Parking for three vehicles would be adjacent the SE side of the smaller barn.
18. Existing window and door openings are proposed to be utilised, some of which are original and some have been added at a later date. One new opening is proposed in the southern gable end at first floor in the larger barn together with a small opening in the ground floor west elevation.
19. The domestic curtilage is proposed to comprise a small area of formal amenity space around the dwelling enclosed by a hedgerow, including area for bin storage and an electric car charging point. The existing York stone around the building is proposed to remain, and a small area of additional York stone pavers would be added.
20. The existing wooded area outside the domestic curtilage and ownership is owned by United utilities and would remain as woodland with the existing wire fence remaining to denote the ownership boundary. The only development proposed in the wooded area outside of the domestic curtilage would be a geothermal borehole and a water source borehole.
21. A foul sewage treatment plant is also proposed discharging to soakaway.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the application be APPROVED subject to the following conditions

- 1. Statutory 3-year time period within which to commence development.**
- 2. Carry out in accordance with specified approved plans and reports.**
- 3. Submit and agree the precise details of the materials and finishes for the walls, roofs.**
- 4. Submit and agree a written scheme of investigation for Historic building recording before conversion.**
- 5. Agree details of windows and doors prior to installation.**
- 6. Wall to store built in reclaimed stone and stone slates to match the existing building. Pointing of walls as detailed in approved plans.**

- 7 Roof clad using existing stone slates with any replacements agreed to match.**
- 8 The garden boundary including around the parking area shall be native mixed hedging in accordance with agreed landscape plan and implemented before the dwelling is occupied or the first available planting season following substantial completion.**
- 9 The parking and turning area shall be carried out in accordance with the details shown on approved plan Landscape Layout 2020 LS-100 revision F before the dwelling is occupied.**
- 10. Notwithstanding what is shown in the approved plans, no external lighting shall be installed other than in complete accordance with an amended scheme to be submitted for approval in writing by the Authority.**
- 11. Rainwater goods - Guttering shall be as detailed on the approved plan, and finished in black**
- 12. Internal pipework only**
- 13. Convert within shell, No re-building.**
- 14. Remove all domestic permitted development rights, including for outbuildings.**
- 15 In accordance with Arboricultural Method Statement subject to the additional conditions and informatives from the PDNPA Tree Officer covering;**
 - i. Pre-commencement meeting to clarify working methods and check tree protection**
 - ii. Carry out in accordance with the requirements of the Arboricultural report and tree protection plans**
 - iii. Submit and agree full details of tree removals and tree and hedge planting for written approval**
- 16 Landscaping in accordance with approved plan Landscape Layout 2020 LS-100 revision D and subject to 15 above.**
- 17 Domestic curtilage to be limited to that shown on the approved landscape plan.**
- 18 The development shall be completed under a European Protected Species mitigation license**
- 19. Works to take place outside of breeding bird season.**
- 20. Pre-commencement check for barn owl survey.**
- 22. Fourth bedroom ancillary accommodation to house and not rented out separately**
- 23 In accordance with Sustainability Statement**
- 24. Vehicular access and parking area not to be given over to surfaced hardstanding**
- 25. Submit for agreement precise details of the water and ground source boreholes and any surface cabinets/pipe runs.**

- 26 Statutory pre-commencement condition for submission of biodiversity gain plan.**
- 27 Implementation of biodiversity gain plan and landscaping within first available planting season following substantial completion or first domestic use.**

Key Issues

22. Whether the development would conserve the character, appearance and amenity of the existing buildings, their setting, and the surrounding landscape.
23. Impacts upon ecology / Biodiversity including trees.
24. Access and parking impacts

History

25. 2022 – Planning Permission granted for conversion to dwelling Ref NP/CEC/1221/1309. No work was carried out and consent therefore lapsed in 2025.

Consultations

26. Highway Authority – No response to date.
27. Cheshire East Council - No response to date
28. Rainow Parish Council - Object.
 - Question the need for a dwelling in a position where historically residents have been moved away from the water catchment area of the reservoir because of the possibility of contamination.
 - Recommend that a formal ground water assessment is obtained from an expert hydrologist.
 - Question the usage of this dwelling.
29. Natural England – No objections.
30. Considers that the proposed development will not have significant adverse impacts on statutory designated sites – The Goyt Valley SSSI nor have likely significant effects on the Peak District Moors (South Pennine Moors Phase 1) SPA and South Pennine Moors SAC and has no objection to the proposed development. (Planning Officer Note: These lie 1km to the east)
31. Natural England are happy to see that both the submitted ecological appraisal and bat scoping survey mention that works are to take place outside of the bird breeding season, ensuring no disturbance to the breeding birds assemblage for which the SPA is designated.
32. PDNPA Tree Officer – No objections subject to suggested conditions
33. No objection regards tree impacts. Those few trees which are proposed for removal are acceptable in the context of appropriate new mitigation planting being conditioned.
34. The supplied arboricultural report is thorough and makes recommendations which will need to be followed if the development is to assured of retaining a setting of appropriate tree cover. Suggests conditions to address all of these report recommendations.

35. The arboricultural report is from 4½ years ago. Its requirements will all remain appropriate, but an update of current tree stock will be required, given that it stated in 2021 that several identified trees would require reassessment with regard to symptoms of Ash Dieback disease and Dutch Elm Disease. The suggested condition allows for this.
36. The arboricultural report indicates that mitigation tree planting will likely include new trees on land owned by United Utilities. Although this is within the submitted red line area and can be conditioned, the applicant would also need the permission of United Utilities to plant on their land.
37. PDNPA Archaeology – No objections subject to condition to secure building recording.
38. Refers to previous response which remains valid and is summarised below. It should be noted that the design and detailed concerns raised then were addressed by amended drawings in the 2022 approval and incorporated into the 2026 scheme.

Significance

39. The buildings are heritage assets of local interest. Their significance lie largely in their historic and architectural interest. This largely resides in their surviving form and fabric as the last two surviving buildings of the lost Lower Hooleyhey farmstead, surviving historic features and fabric, legibility of their historic function and phases of development and alteration, their traditional materials and vernacular form and their surviving agricultural character.
40. The buildings have undergone unsympathetic changes and alternation in the 20th century, including new openings being punched through, use of non-traditional materials such as concrete dressings and use of concrete mortar.

Proposed development

41. Replacement of inappropriate modern repairs and materials, such a concrete dressing and mortar with traditional stone and lime mortar would enhance the architectural interest of the building.
42. Conversion of whole range of building is proposed, including the small square structure previously used for storage. Current and future storage needs for the property needs to be considered. If all the buildings are being converted where will the usual domestic, garden and garden items and paraphernalia be stored? Would additional buildings be required for this? Additional buildings could be harmful to the buildings and their setting.
43. Conversion of all the buildings also requires a modern extension to accommodate the proposed plant room. Could this not be accommodated within the existing range of buildings on site?. Consideration should be given to leaving at least part of the structures, and the small square structure would seem the most appropriate for storage purposes.
44. Any parking areas or amenity space would need to be carefully introduced to ensure it does not result in increased domestication of site, and dilution of surviving agricultural character of the buildings and site.

Recommendation

45. As a non-designated heritage asset, a balanced planning decision need to be made that has regard to the significance of the heritage asset and the scale of the harm detailed above.

46. Should the application be considered acceptable then a programme of building recording (Historic England Level 2) will need to be secured by condition to mitigate the harm resulting from the proposed development in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation to be approved by the PDNPA archaeology team.

Representations

47. None to date.

Statutory framework

48. 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:
- a) Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage
 - b) Promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of national parks by the public
49. 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.
50. In the Peak District National Park, the development plan comprises the Core Strategy (adopted 2011) and the Development Management policies (adopted 2019) and an adopted neighbourhood development plan (where relevant).
51. This application must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Main Policies

52. Relevant Core Strategy policies: GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, L1, L3, CC1, HC1
53. Relevant Development Management policies: DMC3, DMC5, DMC8, DMC10, DMT8

Supplementary Planning Documents

- Climate Change and Sustainable Building (2013)
- Conversions (2022)
- Design Guide (2007)
- Building Design Guide (1987)
- Alterations and Extensions (2014)
- Transport (2019)

National Planning Policy Framework

54. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was revised in August 2026 and is a material consideration. Development plan policies relevant to this application are up-to-date and in accordance with the NPPF and therefore should be given full weight in the determination of this application.
55. The main relevant sections of the NPPF to this application state;

56. N4: Protected Landscapes

Development proposals within Protected Landscapes should be limited in scale and extent and sensitively located and designed to avoid harm to the statutory purposes and special qualities of the Protected Landscape. Substantial weight should be placed on the importance of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of these areas, and to conserving and enhancing wildlife and cultural heritage in National Parks and the Broads.

57. HE7: Decisions on non-designated heritage assets

Development proposals which would have a positive effect on a non-designated heritage asset should be supported. Where a development proposal would harm the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, this should be weighed against the benefits of the proposal and a balanced judgement made, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the non-designated heritage asset.

Assessment

Principle

- 58. The application is supported by a heritage assessment. It is agreed that the barn is a non-designated heritage asset of local historic and architectural significance.
- 59. There has been no significant change in circumstances since the 2022 approval. The building remains disused and in need of repair and maintenance.
- 60. In principle, conversion to a market dwelling is necessary to secure a viable use for these non-designated heritage assets and achieve their conservation and enhancement. The proposed change of use is therefore acceptable in principle under policy HC1. C.
- 61. The key issue therefore is whether the proposed scheme of conversion would conserve the character, appearance and significance of the buildings together with their setting within the local landscape.

Visual impact of development on the landscape.

- 62. The conversion plans and site layout/landscaping plans are all carried forward from the previous approved scheme.
- 63. In the last approval concerns were raised about the potential impact of the residential use on the wider landscape setting in terms of the visual impact of the domestication that would occur. It is noted however that the development would be viewed in context with the large car park nearby which has altered the landscape of the immediate area from being entirely agricultural and open countryside, to one having been altered and developed for the purposes of maintaining the reservoir and providing public access and enjoyment of the area.
- 64. These concerns were overcome in the 2022 scheme by the proposed residential curtilage being drawn tightly around the property as well as being screened by a mixed native hedgerow.
- 65. That same restricted curtilage and landscape treatment is repeated in this application. The native hedge forming the boundary of the domestic curtilage would provide a low-key, natural boundary, as well as enhancing the biodiversity of the site. The small area of formal garden, parking and any associated residential paraphernalia will therefore be well screened from the road by the boundary treatment and the wooded area to the front of the site, along with the natural topography of the land.

66. The wooded area to the north-east between the buildings and the car park will remain as existing, apart from being the location of the water borehole and ground source heat borehole.
67. The proposed parking area would be located off the south-east side of the smaller barn and open onto the track and footpath. This is proposed to be a reinforced grassed area, and would therefore not present prominently having a natural appearance. This area is also proposed to be bounded by the native hedge, which would screen the parked cars from all views other than from the short section of the footpath passing down the side of the site.
68. The vehicular track leading to the site is currently an informal two wheel run crushed stone agricultural style green track which serves the barns and adjacent agricultural fields beyond. This is proposed to remain in the ownership of the water company but a condition is required to be imposed to ensure that the parking area and the access (other than two crushed stone wheel tracks) is not given over to a hard surfacing which would be inappropriate in this setting.
69. Subject to the conditions set out below to restricting the limit of the domestic curtilage, and to secure appropriate boundary treatment the scheme of conversion would be appropriately assimilated into the local setting and would secure appropriate conservation and enhancement to the local landscape to accord with local development plan policy.

Impact of conversion on the buildings

70. The larger barn provides for a 3-bedroom dwelling with the smaller building providing a detached fourth en-suite bedroom. As in the previous approval a condition is suggested to be imposed to ensure that this building remains additional ancillary bedroom accommodation to the host dwelling, and is not rented out separately.
71. The small stone store proposed to be attached to the smaller building is considered to be in-keeping with the existing building, with physical evidence of a former attached building visible on the gable end. This would remove the need for further garden buildings which would be harmful to the setting.
72. A structural report confirms that the building can be converted with only localised repairs being required.
73. The scheme retains the stone slate roofs. The walls, which have been badly pointed in the past with cement mortar are to be repointed with lime-based mortar which is more appropriate along with replacing concrete lintels with stone. New powder coated aluminium rainwater goods are proposed along with the removal of soil vent pipes and installation of discreet vents to the walls, all of which will provide considerable enhancement to the current condition.
74. All the windows and doors are proposed to be replaced with recessed timber framed windows. The window frames have been simplified in their appearance, which would be appropriate to reflect the agricultural character of the site and would be an enhancement over the existing.
75. The single new opening to the south west gable of the larger barn is acceptable in this case as it would reflect the character of the barn. It is necessary to facilitate the conversion, providing a window to the main bedroom, and therefore secure the long-term future of the building. It would have a very limited impact upon the barn in views from within the wider landscape. A further small new window opening is shown on the ground floor western elevation to light the ground floor en-suite bathroom. This is small and sited within a largely

blank elevation so will conserve the current high solid to void ratio of this elevation. The visual impact would be minimal, with no harm to the overall character and appearance of the building and is therefore considered acceptable.

76. Internally, few historic features remain as the building had been used as a toilet block serving the car park, with some modern and unsympathetic additions, which would be removed. The internal layout would be amended with the introduction of domestic features within the building. With the removal of the existing unsympathetic internal features, the minor impact of the changes to the layout would be clearly outweighed by the sensitive conversion and conservation of the building and its long-term retention.
77. The overall design of the conversion scheme is sympathetic to the historic character and appearance of the buildings. It is in accordance with our design guidance as it utilises existing openings with appropriate new window frames and doors as well as addressing the unsympathetic changes and use of material carried out for the past uses. If permission were granted, conditions are suggested to secure appropriate design details.
78. If permission were granted, the recommended condition from the Authority's Archaeologist is also necessary to secure a Written Scheme of Investigation for a programme of historic building recording before the buildings are converted.
79. A condition would also need to be imposed to prohibit re-building, and to remove specified domestic permitted development rights to ensure that the conservation and enhancement of the building secured upon conversion is not subsequently eroded by inappropriate development during the lifetime of the development.

Other matters

The Parish Council objection

80. This is noted however it is concluded that insufficient weight can be attached to the concerns to warrant any change to the recommendation. The need for the market dwelling is to secure a viable use within policy.
81. Whilst the buildings themselves would not have been residential originally, the valley had been long settled by a number of dwellings that were taken out of use, and in many cases destroyed, by the introduction of the reservoir. It is also noted that other isolated residential dwellings/farms are visible from the site and consequently there are no concerns about this proposal causing harm to this landscape.
82. Neither are there any concerns about water quality given appropriate facilities for the treatment of foul and surface waters are proposed. It should also be noted the previous use was for public toilets in connection with the water companies visitor car park. Finally, groundwater abstraction is covered by separate consents from the Environment Agency.

Highway Matters

83. Again, no response has been received from the Highway Authority. As noted above, a parking and turning area is proposed for three spaces, which is acceptable for a four-bedroom dwelling.
84. The access onto Hooleyhey Lane is existing and due to the wide verge has adequate visibility. The development therefore would be provided with satisfactory access and off-street parking and will not harm highway safety in accordance with policies DMT3 and DMT8.

Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain

85. The application is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.

Bats

86. An Updated Bat Scoping Survey (Feb 2026) has been submitted. Bat droppings were recorded in the main building and evidence of barn owl was also recorded but no evidence of active nesting was observed.
87. Barn swallow nests were also present in the building. No evidence of bats was recorded in the smaller building however, additional Barn owl feathers were recorded.
88. A follow-up emergence survey in July 2026 recorded five species of bat, with overall low activity and minimal numbers. No bats were recorded roosting in the building. However, during the original bat survey for the 2022 approval, five bats were found to be roosting within the larger building. Due to this the works will need to be completed under licence issued by Natural England after any planning permission has been granted.
89. To compensate for the loss of roosting opportunities at least five bat boxes are to be installed onsite and the external lighting designed to avoid illuminating bat roost features and installed boxes.

Birds

90. Due to the presence of breeding birds in the buildings a condition is necessary to ensure works take place outside of the breeding bird season or if not possible a targeted breeding bird nest scoping survey be conducted prior to the start on site or an ecological clerk of works appointed.
91. A condition to secure pre-commencement barn owl survey of the internal areas of the buildings is also suggested.
92. To compensate for the loss of nesting opportunities within the buildings, bird boxes are proposed to be installed onsite. Given that barn owls were not recorded breeding onsite, compensation for the loss of nesting opportunities is not considered necessary in the report. In addition, an owl box is already located approximately 40m from site and as such, the provision of further nesting opportunities for barn owls is not required.

BNG

93. The site comprises other neutral grassland, modified grassland, rural trees, wet woodland, artificial unvegetated unsealed surface and developed land; sealed surface. An area of other neutral grassland (0.036ha, 0.14 habitat units) and modified grassland (0.021ha, 0.043 habitat units) will be lost to the development.
94. To meet the mandatory 10% gain, it is proposed to enhance an area of neutral grassland (0.13ha, 1.02 habitat units) from poor condition to moderate condition and, create ruderal/ephemeral (0.029ha, 0.17 habitat units) and vegetated garden (0.024ha, 0.053 habitat units). The proposals will create an uplift of 0.53 habitat units, achieving a 15.2% Biodiversity Net Gain. The trading rules of the metric are satisfied as the same distinctiveness or better habitat will be achieved.
95. In most cases, where the increase in biodiversity units is 0.5 or more the gain would be deemed as significant however, vegetated gardens although contributing to the overall BNG score cannot be legally secured and the remaining areas of habitat creation or enhancement are not considered significant relative to existing habitats on site; therefore,

in this case, it is not considered proportionate to require monitoring for 30 years. A condition to secure is therefore appropriate.

Climate change mitigation

96. Policy CC1 requires all new development to demonstrate how it would make the most sustainable use of land and resources and to set out how it would reduce the need for energy, use and supply it efficiently, and seek to use low carbon and renewable energy.
97. The range of design features set out in the sustainability statement for the scheme are as follows:-
- Breathable CO2 absorbing building materials.
 - Renewable building materials; Woodfibre boards and insulation. Woodwool boards, lime plaster, render and screed. Expanded clay aggregate and glass insulation.
 - High Levels of insulation and air tightness
 - Timber double glazed windows internal shutters
 - Building structure with good thermal mass to retain heat during winter and cool in summer.
 - Ground source heat pump
 - Borehole sourced water supply
 - Sustainable surface water management strategy
 - Non-electric sewage treatment plant
 - Low energy lighting
 - Energy efficient water based UFH throughout
 - BMS thermostatic controls for hot water and heating
 - Car charger
 - Bike Storage
 - Waste Recycling
 - Consideration of Solar Gain and Daylighting
98. Overall, these measures are considered to be in accordance with policy CC1. They represent an appropriate response as part of a sensitive re-use of an historic building which is in itself a sustainable development.
99. In the context of the development and limited curtilage, the site would be unsuitable for solar panels as these would be likely to harm the character of the building and the setting as well as being too shadowed by tree cover.

Lighting and CCTV

100. The supporting statement sets out that PIR activated security LED floodlights are proposed to be installed at eaves level to illuminate around the property. PIR activated LED downward orientated fittings on wall brackets are also proposed to be installed adjacent to external doors and on external plantroom / bin store. PIR activated Bat friendly Low lux downward orientated way finders to illuminate driveway and carparking area.
101. CCTV cameras to be installed at eaves level to cover approach to front and rear elevations
102. No detail of the scheme have been provided. With care needing to be taken with lighting to avoid harm to bats and ensure that light spillage onto the bat boxes is minimised a condition is therefore necessary to agree the precise details. This would also ensure the appropriateness of the scheme in landscape terms alongside impact on bats.

Water source bore hole and geothermal bore hole

103. These are proposed to be sited in the wooded area NE of the buildings. These would typically require only minor above ground structures normally comprising small grp covers

with all pipework back to the house underground. However, as no detail is provided in the application a condition is necessary to secure appropriate detailing and any further mitigation required.

Drainage

104. Foul drainage is to be directed to a new treatment plant located off the north west of the buildings which would discharge to a soakaway. This would also pick up and treat rainwater and excess groundwater along with perimeter site drainage.
105. As the site lies within a ground water risk zone a permit will be required from the Environment Agency to discharge to ground.

Conclusion

106. The proposal would conserve and enhance the historical significance of the barn, its character and appearance as well as its setting within the local landscape.
107. The change of use to a market dwelling would provide a viable use and is required to achieve conservation or enhancement of the building, thereby meeting housing policy HC1.
108. The development would enhance biodiversity, would not harm highway safety and given there are no close neighbours, have no impact on amenity.
109. The proposal is therefore in accordance with the development plan, and in the absence of any further material considerations, the application is recommended for approval, subject to the conditions set out above.

Human Rights

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

List of Background Papers (not previously published)

111. Nil

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