
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 November 2016

by Claire Searson MSc PGDip BSc (Hons) MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 16th November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/M9496/W/16/3155382

Field off Unnamed Road (Grid Ref - 419514, 376758) Foolow, Derbyshire, S32 5QA

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Webster against the decision of Peak District National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref NP/DDD/0216/0080, dated 1 February 2016, was refused by notice dated 24 March 2016.
 - The development proposed is the construction of a steel framed agricultural building.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the Peak District National Park.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located at a junction of a series of enclosed agricultural fields, bounded by dry stone walling and used for grazing. There is a former stone agricultural building within the site, which is in a dilapidated condition having no roof and partially collapsed walls.
 4. The site is located to the west of Foolow, a small village. A public footpath runs immediately adjacent to the site and the plot accessed via a short length of track, from the Foolow-Eyam Road.
 5. As part of the proposals the existing stone barn and parts of the dry stone walls would be demolished and a portal framed agricultural building which would be around 18metres long, and 12 metres high would be erected. It would extend to around 3.6metres to eaves height, with a ridge height of around 5.3 metres and the roof and sides would be clad in polyester coated sheeting in a stone blue colour.
 6. Paragraph 115 of the Framework states that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks. In addition, section 11A(2) of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 places a duty to have regard to the statutory purposes of the national park. These are to conserve and enhance natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of such areas. This is also reflected by policies GSP1, GSP3 of the Peak District National Park Core Strategy 2011(CS) and Policies LC4 and LC13 the Local Plan
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- 2001 (LP). The effect on the landscape is therefore an important consideration.
7. The barn would be of a large size and scale and has a utilitarian design. It would represent an isolated building within the landscape and would be clearly visible from a wide range of public vantage points, including from the Foolow-Eyam Road and the A623 as well as from the wide network of public footpaths within and around the appeal site.
 8. The enclosed pastoral landscape creates a strong sense of scale and visual unity and due to the scale and colour of the proposed building, the development would visually dominate in this location. The siting of the development would further compound this effect as it would result in the erosion of the field pattern in this location and partial loss of drystone walls.
 9. Overall I consider that the development would be particularly obtrusive and incongruous within this landscape setting and would cause harm to the character and appearance of the landscape within the National Park. This harm would not be overcome by any great degree by the imposition of a planning condition in respect of materials and colour.
 10. The existing ruinous stone building on site positively contributes to the overall landscape character and while the loss of this in itself, would not warrant the refusal of consent, it cannot be said that the replacement of the dilapidated stone building would offer any visual enhancements in support of the proposed development.
 11. I accept that there are a number of other examples of modern isolated barns within the countryside around Foolow. However the visual impact of these buildings was more limited than the proposals before me as these were more muted in their appearance. I also saw that these were less obtrusive in the overall landscape due to their siting which has taken into account topography, landform and existing landscape features such as groups of trees and the drystone walling.
 12. It has been put to me that the location and siting of the building would offer economic and environmental benefits in respect of animal welfare, operational requirements and practicalities of such a development in this location. However, none of these factors would outweigh the harm caused to the character and appearance of the landscape of the National Park, to which I must attach great weight.
 13. I therefore conclude that the development would cause harm to the character and appearance of the landscape within the Peak District National Park. This would be in clear conflict with the statutory purposes of the National Park as well as with paragraph 115 of the Framework. In seeking to protect such purposes and the valued characteristics of the National Park including landscape character, as well as ensuring good design the development would also fail to accord with CS Policies GSP1, GSP3 and LP Policies LC4 and LC13.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons above, taking into account all other matters raised, I dismiss the appeal.

C Searson INSPECTOR