



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 June 2019

by M Savage BSc (Hons) MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 July 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/M9496/W/19/3225423

Levens, Weags Bridge Road, Grindon ST13 7TP

- 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 Mrs Julia Lyne-Watt against the decision of Peak District National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref NP/SM/0918/0816, dated 5 September 2018, was refused by notice dated 29 November 2018.
 - The development proposed is conversion of barn for holiday use.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the conversion of the barn for holiday use at Levens, Weags Bridge Road, Grindon ST13 7TP in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref NP/SM/0918/0816, dated 5 September 2018, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the conditions below:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: drawing numbers 2.1 revision 1, 5.2 revision 2 and 6.2 revision 1.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall only be occupied for the purposes of short-term holiday letting accommodation, and shall not be occupied by any one individual, family or group for a period exceeding 28 days in any calendar year. The owner shall maintain an up-to-date register of the name of all occupiers of the residential accommodation and their home addresses, and shall make this register available to the Local Planning Authority within 14 days of the receipt of written request.
 - 4) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no alterations to the external appearance of the converted barn shall be carried out and no extensions, porches, ancillary buildings, satellite antenna, gates, fences, walls or other means of boundary enclosure shall be erected within the site.
 - 5) All new service lines associated with the approved development shall be placed underground and the ground restored to its original condition thereafter.

Procedural Matters

2. The appellant has submitted revised plans as part of the appeal. The amended plans include minor revisions and, as the nature of concerns of those who would normally have been consulted are clear from the consultation on the original set of plans, I do not consider that their interests would be prejudiced if I take these amended plans into account. I shall therefore determine the appeal and application for planning permission on the basis of the amended plans submitted as part of the appeal.
3. During the course of the appeal the authority adopted its Development Management Policies: Part 2 of the Local Plan for the Peak District National Park (DMP)(May 2019) which together with the Peak District National Park Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document (CSDPD) 2011 now forms the development plan for the area. The main parties have been given the opportunity to comment on the implications of this for the appeal and the authority has drawn my attention to those policies it considers are of relevance which I have taken into account in coming to my decision.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area bearing in mind it would be within the Grindon Conservation Area (GCA) and Peak District National Park.

Reasons

5. Grindon is an attractive village, generally characterised by traditional stone buildings, dry stone walls and wide verges and vegetated open spaces which contribute towards the verdant character of the area. From my assessment of the evidence before me, the significance of the GCA is derived from the historic pattern of development, use of traditional materials, its verdant character and its relationship with agricultural fields beyond.
6. Policy GSP1 of the CSDPD 2011, states that all development shall be consistent with the National Park's legal purposes and duty. The two purposes of National Parks¹ are to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the areas, and to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of National Parks by the public. Where there is a conflict between the two purposes, greater weight is to be attached to the conservation purpose. Paragraph 172 of the Framework 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.
7. The appeal site comprises a small field barn constructed of stone with blue clay tiled roof and tallet steps, bound by dry stone walls, situated within the GCA and Peak District National Park. Policy RT2 of the CSDPD states, in part, that the change of use of a traditional building of historic or vernacular merit to serviced or self-catering holiday accommodation will be permitted, except where it would create unacceptable landscape impact in open countryside. Policy DMC10 of the DMP supports the conversion of a heritage asset provided that it can accommodate the new use without changes that adversely affect its

¹ Section 11A(2) of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949

- character; and the new use of the building or any curtilage created would not be visually intrusive in its landscape, amongst other things.
8. The fields surrounding the building are identified as important open space within the Grindon Conservation Area Appraisal (GCAA) and are part of the historic settlement's original medieval strip field system. Although located on the outskirts of the village, given its elevated position, the appeal building is relatively prominent and, as a result of its vernacular and traditional features, makes a positive contribution towards the GCA.
 9. To convert the building for holiday use, the external walls would be repointed with lime mortar, the building would be re-roofed re-using the blue clay tiles, the stone steps would be repaired and the perimeter path would be repaired with matching stone and the path to the door would be grass, reinforced with Turfprotecta mesh. Windows would be provided at the ventilation slots and an 'owl hole' window would be located in the eastern elevation. A Velux Conservation roof light would be fitted in the roof. The door to the hay loft would be replaced with a window and the door would be provided with a glazed inner screen with a split stable design and vertically boarded external door. Internal works would be carried out to insulate the building and optimise floor heights.
 10. Policy GSP2 of the CSDPD states that when development is permitted, a design will be sought that respects the character of the area, amongst other things. Policy GSP3 of the CSDPD states that development must respect, conserve and enhance all valued characteristics of the site and buildings that are subject to the development proposal. Policy DMC3 of the DMP seeks to ensure that development 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. Policy L3 of the CSDPD seeks to ensure that development conserves and enhances historic assets and their settings, amongst other things while Policy L1 of the CSDPD seeks to ensure that development conserves and enhances valued landscape character.
 11. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires me to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the GCA. Policy DMC8 of the DMP states that applications should demonstrate how the character or appearance and significance of the Conservation Area will be preserved or enhanced, amongst other things.
 12. The introduction of a domestic curtilage in this location has the potential to detract from the GCA. However, given that the building would be used for short term holiday use, I consider it unlikely that significant domestic paraphernalia would be introduced to the site. Whilst the appeal site would have its own access, I saw that there is an existing gated access which serves the site. The retention of existing boundary treatments and limited landscaping, including the use of grass reinforcing mesh, would help minimise the visual impact of the appeal scheme. Moreover, it would be possible to restrict permitted development rights which would help preserve the character and appearance of the building and its setting.
 13. In relation to the effect of the proposal on the significance of the GCA, the vernacular and open space around the building would remain and, although the introduction of a conservation roof light, windows and a black flue pipe would

have a minor negative impact on the character of the barn, views of the site from the public domain would appear largely unchanged.

14. Whilst the appeal building would be capable of accommodating livestock, the appellant asserts that the building is no longer part of a working farm and is therefore redundant. A structural survey submitted in support of the appeal confirms that, although structurally sound, the appeal building is in need of some repair. The heritage statement concludes that the level of harm arising from demolition or eventual collapse would be substantial and, given the prominent location of the building I concur that its loss would harm the GCA.
15. Whilst there would be a minor negative impact on the character of the barn as a result of the appeal scheme, the building would be restored and converted to a viable use which would ensure its long-term preservation, this is a matter to which I afford significant weight. The appeal scheme would therefore help preserve the character and appearance of the GCA and would help conserve the cultural heritage of the National Park. Thus, there would be no harm to the character and appearance of the area and there would be no conflict with policies GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, L1 and L3 of the CSDPD and policies DMC3, DMC8, and DMC10 of the DMP, the requirements of which are set out above. There would also be no conflict with the Framework.

Conditions

16. I have considered the conditions put forward by the Council and other parties against the advice in the Framework and Planning Practice Guidance. As a result, I have amended some of them for consistency and clarity and omitted others. In the interests of certainty and proper planning I have included conditions relating to commencement and plans.
17. I have considered the appeal on the basis that the building would be used for holiday accommodation. Policy DMR 3 of the DMP states that where self-catering accommodation is acceptable, its use will be restricted to no more than 28 days per calendar year by any one person. In light of this policy I consider it reasonable to include a condition restricting the occupancy of the site accordingly.
18. The site is a historic vernacular building in the GCA and Peak District National Park. It is therefore necessary to restrict permitted development rights and to ensure that services associated with the approved development are placed underground to ensure that the character of the building is retained and so that it preserves the character and appearance of the GCA and I have included conditions to secure these matters.
19. Since I have included a plans condition and restricted permitted development rights, it is not necessary to secure design details via condition or to secure landscaping details.

Conclusion

20. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all matters raised, the appeal is allowed subject to the conditions set out above.

M Savage

INSPECTOR