



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 July 2022

by Mark Caine BSc (Hons) MTPL MRTPI LSRA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5 August 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/M9496/W/22/3290740

Crawshaw Farm, Rod Side, Sheffield, S6 6HU

- 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 & Mrs Hague against the decision of Peak District National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref NP/S/1020/0943, dated 8 October 2020, was refused by notice dated 30 July 2021.
 - The development proposed is the change of use from traditional barn to holiday let.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposed conversion of the barn to holiday accommodation would be acceptable, having particular regard to the provisions of the development plan, and the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the building and the Peak District National Park.

Reasons

3. The appeal relates to a single storey disused field barn that is situated within an isolated raised position in a pastoral field, on sloping ground that is defined by dry-stone walls, and is located off a farm track. The appeal site forms a part of the wider landscape of rolling uplands, isolated farmsteads, straight roads and regular fields. The surrounding area is therefore predominantly open countryside, characterised by agricultural land and an expansive rolling landscape. Although the Authority has conceded that the appeal site is not located within a Natural Zone, it is within the Peak District National Park (National Park).
4. Policy DMC10 of the Peak District National Park Development Management Policies Document 2019 (DMP), supports the conversion of a heritage asset provided that, amongst other things, it can accommodate the new use without changes that adversely affect its character; and the new use of the building or any curtilage created would not be visually intrusive in its landscape.
5. Both main parties agree that the appeal building is not a heritage asset. However, the preamble to Policy DMC10 sets out that proposals for the conversion of other lower quality or rudimentary buildings may be the subject of planning applications for conversion. Whilst this supporting text states that such buildings will rarely be worthy of conversion to higher intensity uses, this

is not precluded, and is permitted where they display sufficient quality and substance to justify their survival and deliver a sustainable outcome.

6. In addition, Policy RT2 of the Peak District National Park Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2011 (CS) permits the conversion or change of use of existing traditional buildings of historic or vernacular merit to serviced or self-catering holiday accommodation in towns and villages or on farms. This is providing that there is no unacceptable landscape impact in the open countryside.
7. The Authority does not dispute that the barn is shown on a 1893-94 Ordinance Survey Map. Whilst it is in a dilapidated condition, the barn is simple in form and other than for its sheet metal roof, and a small number of openings, appears to have retained the majority of its traditional architecture, materials, and appearance. These largely reflect its agricultural origins and are in keeping with the local vernacular and rural setting and character of the area. As such, I have no substantive reason to conclude that the principle of the proposed barn conversion to holiday accommodation would not be acceptable in this instance, subject to the consideration of other factors, including character and appearance and landscape impact.
8. In these respects, paragraph 176 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) requires that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.
9. The removal of the existing rusting corrugated roof material and reinstatement of the traditional stone slate roof would provide a feature that is typical of the sporadically sited buildings in the area, including those on Platts Farm, and would clearly improve the appearance of the building. The overall form of the original building would largely be retained, and there would be no new external doors or window openings. A new internal porch set behind the large opening in the southern elevation would also include a secondary door and a new window that would be concealed behind traditional timber barn doors.
10. Nonetheless, a pinfold style enclosed area, utilising dry stone walls and a timber gate, is proposed to adjoin the southern side elevation of the building. This would only be marginally smaller than the footprint of the barn and be hard surfaced in crushed stone, protruding further into and reducing the openness of the field to that side of the site.
11. Whilst the proposal would be utilised for short-term holiday use, the enclosed area would be large enough to park a car and accommodate other domestic paraphernalia that would be likely to be used by holiday makers. Although a planning condition could be imposed to restrict some forms of development which would otherwise be permitted, the likely proliferation of domestic paraphernalia such as garden furniture could not practically be controlled by conditions.
12. Furthermore, the submitted plans state that the existing crushed stone hardstanding would be retained and extended slightly to provide an access/driveway. However, I noted on my site visit that any previous access road from Platts Lane has been greened over and is not readily apparent from close or long range views. Whilst little detail is before me in respect of the

- dimensions of the proposed access road, this would run up the hillside to the appeal building, from Platts Lane, and be of an appreciable length and width.
13. As such, the stark appearance of the hard surface of the proposed access road and parking area in combination with the likely introduction of paraphernalia, and activity associated with vehicle movements into and out of the site would lead to the barn taking on a more domestic appearance. This would also represent an unwarranted urban encroachment that would erode and be detrimental to the intrinsic value and character of the rural landscape and countryside in this location.
 14. In reaching this finding, I have had regard to the appellants' submitted sketched illustration and I am mindful that the Landscape and Visual Statement (LVS) concludes that the visual influence of the site is very localised, and that the impact of the visual and landscape changes would be negligible. The LVS also finds that the temporary effects that may arise from the occasional viewing of a car or garden table and chairs would not be significant due to the screening effect of the pinfold enclosure, and that the proposed changes would be in keeping with the landscape character.
 15. However, there is little evidence before me to demonstrate that the drystone wall along the pinfold enclosure would be of sufficient height to fully screen views of parked vehicles and domestic paraphernalia, and there is no tree coverage in the vicinity. Although it is stated that the pinfold wall is low enough to only be seen from certain locations, the LVS demonstrates that it would be readily apparent from viewpoints 01, 02, 03, 06 and from longer distances in the local road network in viewpoint 12. The likely paraphernalia would also be clearly visible through the timber gate or when this is pinned back, from the public footpath on Platts Lane. Furthermore, the topography and elevated position of the barn is such that the proposed access road would be clearly visible from a number of public vantage points in the area.
 16. As a result of all of the factors above, I therefore find that the proposed conversion of the barn to holiday accommodation would not be acceptable, having particular regard to the provisions of the development plan, and the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the building and the National Park.
 17. It would thereby conflict with CS Policies GSP1, GSP3, L1, L3 and RT2, and Policies DMC3 and DMC10 of the DMP. Together these policies seek to secure the statutory purposes of the National Park and give priority to its conservation and enhancement, and to protect landscape character and other valued characteristics, whilst also paying attention to the character and design of buildings. In similar respects, conflict would also arise with advice contained in the Authority's Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document with regard to respecting and retaining the character of the original building and its setting.
 18. It would also not accord with Paragraph 176 of the Framework and the relevant statutory purposes and duties which require greater weight to be attached to the purpose of conserving and enhancing natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park, having regard to the Sandford Principle.

Other Matters

19. The economic benefits that would be associated with the diversification of the farm business are noted. It has also been put forward that the existing barn is not suitable for modern agricultural practices given its size and separation from the main farm, and I am aware that the proposed renovation works would include the repair of the existing drystone wall, and the improvement of habitats for both flora & fauna. I also note the appellant's willingness to accept a planning condition to restrict the occupation of the proposal. However, these factors would not outweigh or overcome the harm to the landscape that I have identified above, to which I must attach great weight.
20. The appellants' concerns about the inaccuracies within the Authority's original planning application report are also acknowledged. However, nothing that I have been referred to would lead me to reach a different decision.

Conclusion

21. For the reasons given above, having taken account of the development plan as a whole, along with all other relevant material considerations, the appeal should therefore be dismissed.

Mark Caine

INSPECTOR