



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 October 2024

by A Veevers BA(Hons) PGDip(BCon) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 November 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/M9496/W/24/3340823

Round Meadow Barn, Parsons Lane, Hope S33 6RB

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Martin Harriss against the decision of Peak District National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref is NP/HPK/0723/0869.
 - The development proposed is described as 'refurbishment of the disused stable block to form self-contained holiday accommodation'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issue is whether the proposal would accord with the development plan with regard to the conversion of buildings to holiday accommodation.

Reasons

3. Round Meadow Barn is a relatively isolated dwelling in the countryside, accessed off a narrow vehicular track through field gates, which is also a Public Right of Way. Close to Round Meadow Barn is a single storey detached former stable building, the subject of this appeal.
4. The appeal building is constructed in gritstone with a slate roof and has an 'L' shape form with gable ends and overhanging eaves to the front elevation above the stable doors. It is not overly visible within the wider landscape due to its position on the hillside at the rear of Round Meadow Barn. It is proposed to convert the building to a holiday let and 'infill' the overhanging eaves with stonework to form a small extension to the building.
5. Policy RT2 of the Peak District National Park Local Development Framework: Core Strategy Development Plan Document (October 2011) (the CS) sets out 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 merit in open countryside. Given both parties agree the proposal would cause no harm to the landscape of the open countryside, to which I agree, in order to comply with Policy RT2, the building must comprise a traditional building that has either historic or vernacular merit (or both).
6. No definition of what constitutes a traditional building is provided within Policy RT2 of the CS. Furthermore, unlike other policies in the Development

Management Policies, Part 2 of the Local Plan (May 2019) (the DMP), it is not explicit in Policy RT2 that traditional buildings permitted for conversion must be heritage assets.

7. My attention is drawn to the definition of a traditional building within the supporting text of Chapter 3, paragraph 3.30 of the DMP. This states it should be a building built prior to 1919 with solid walls constructed of moisture permeable materials, usually with stone or slate pitched roofs.
8. Despite being constructed with solid walls of moisture permeable materials, the appeal building has a concrete tile roof and the appeal documentation suggests it was constructed in the 1980s. It does not therefore meet the definition of a traditional building set out in the development plan.
9. Even if the benchmark date of 1919 is somewhat arbitrarily based upon factors relating to the energy efficiency of historic buildings in relation to Building Regulations, and there are likely to be buildings constructed after 1919 that could be described as traditional, I cannot agree that a building constructed within the last 30 to 40 years is a traditional building. Whilst the building is constructed of gritstone and is of a local vernacular form and design found elsewhere in the surrounding area, that does not mean it is a traditional building.
10. Indeed, a building constructed in a vernacular style using traditional materials need not necessarily be old, it could be new. I have been provided with Policy GSP3 of the CS and Policy DMC3 of the DMP, both of which, amongst other things, seek that new development is of a scale and design appropriate to the character and appearance of the National Park in accordance with the Design Guide¹ and reflects the style and traditions of the locality. Thus, in order to accord with these policies, many recently constructed buildings in the area are likely to be of vernacular merit. However, an ordinary reading of the term 'traditional', could not be construed as being new, as suggested by the appellant.
11. If the intention of Policy RT2 was to permit the conversion of any building of vernacular merit to holiday accommodation, there would be no need to refer to the wording 'traditional building'. The aim of Policy RT2 is to ensure that, in offering support for the provision of accommodation for visitors to the area, which can contribute to the local economy, only traditional buildings of particular merit should be converted to such a use.
12. Both parties agree the building is not historic and whilst I find the form and building to have been constructed taking cues from the local vernacular style, and the proposed extension would not harm the character or setting of the building or the area, this is a general requirement of development in the National Park. Due to its age and use of concrete roof tiles, the building would not be traditional in the context of the development plan.
13. For the above reasons, the proposal would not be a conversion of a traditional building of historic or vernacular merit. Consequently, it would conflict with Policy RT2 of the CS, which seeks to control the conversion of buildings to holiday accommodation.

¹ Peak District National Park Design Guide 2007

Other Matters

14. The CS and the DMP recognise the importance of tourism to the rural economy, and which also supports the statutory purposes of the National Park and its duty to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities. The proposal would therefore provide some economic and social benefits. It would contribute to the range and quality of visitor accommodation in the area. Income would also help the appellant's desire to restore their land with a conservation ethos and EV charging provision would be provided which would contribute to the renewable energy and sustainability credentials of the site. However, these benefits would be modest by virtue of the small scale nature of the proposed holiday accommodation to the supply in the area. As such, the modest benefits would not outweigh the identified harm and associated development plan conflict.
15. The proposal would not harm the landscape setting or character of the building or the area. Nevertheless, these are requirements of planning policy and carry neutral weight.

Conclusion

16. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposed development would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations, including the Framework, that indicate that the development should be determined otherwise than in accordance with it.
17. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

A Veevers

INSPECTOR