



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 March 2025

by **J D Clark BA (Hons) DpTRP MCD DMS MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25th April 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Q9495/W/24/3348408

Redundant Barn, Hall Dunnerdale, Seathwaite LA20 6ED

- 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 & Mrs R & L Hibbert against the decision of the Lake District National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref is 7/2023/5740.
 - The development proposed is conversion of 1 Barn to 1 Dwelling (holiday or permanent occupation) (Resubmission of Application Ref: 7/2022/5674).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. A revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published in December 2024. In the interest of natural justice and to ensure neither of the main parties were prejudiced by this matter, I consulted both parties on the changes to the Framework. No comments from either party were received.

Background and Main Issue

3. Planning permission was granted in 2003 (Ref: 7/2003/5221) for the conversion of the barn to a dwelling (holiday or permanent occupation). This subsequently lapsed. In 2022 an application was submitted as a re-submission of the 2003 application. The description was amended and permission was granted for the conversion of the barn to a three bedroomed local occupancy dwelling (the amended description removed reference to holiday accommodation). This was subject to a condition restricting its occupancy to people from the locality which was described as various locations within the National Park (Ref: 7/2022/5674). Copies of these decision have not been submitted and so my description is based on the information submitted.
4. This appeal relates to an application for the conversion of the barn to either permanent or holiday accommodation and therefore the main issue is whether the proposed converted barn would meet a local housing need having regard to the policies in the development plan.

Reasons

5. The appeal site comprises a redundant barn within the hamlet of Hall Dunnerdale. A small settlement within the Lake District National Park. The Council has not raised any concerns about the details of the conversion hence my main issue

concerns its occupancy only, in particular as either holiday accommodation or for permanent occupancy.

6. Local Plan¹ Policy 15 sets out the Authority's strategic approach to housing focusing on making meaningful interventions in the housing market for the good of communities and the economy. It aims to achieve a balanced and resilient housing market with a high proportion of properties in permanent occupation. Policy 18 sets out criteria for proposals for the re-use of buildings for sustainable tourism and holiday accommodation. Amongst other things, it will only support the re-use of an existing building where it would not utilise a building that is suitable for providing local need or affordable needs housing.
7. Policy 18 is intended to lessen the pressure on the existing housing stock which is due to those buying second homes or homes being used for holiday letting purposes. Policies 15 and 18 therefore together strive to ensure sufficient housing for local needs whilst also accommodating the tourist industry.
8. The Council refer to the South Lakeland District Council Strategic Housing Market Assessment (October 2017) which indicates that there is a local need for three bedroomed houses in the area. A copy of this document has not been submitted nor has any more recent information been submitted regarding this matter. The appellants state that there is no certainty that there is a proven demand for local housing in this area. They question the area's suitability as a permanent home due to it being perceived as remote from schools, shops, doctors and public transport; it is not within walking distance of such services; and it is difficult for emergency vehicles to reach. With regard to the latter, I did not observe any obvious reasons why this should be the case given that the building is adjacent to the road leading through the hamlet.
9. No evidence has been submitted that indicates that the market has been explored in terms of the demand for local housing in this area. Although there may be no services or facilities nearby, limited information about the level of need in this area has been submitted and the document referred to by the Council is some years old, the Local Plan refers to the overall pressure on the local housing supply in the Lake District. The proposed conversion would result in a three bedroomed dwelling, adding a family home into this rural hamlet. This would provide an opportunity to meet a local housing need, consistent with Local Plan Policies 15 and 18. Its occupation for holiday accommodation would not provide such an opportunity and therefore, conflict with these policies.

Other Matters

10. The appellants' refer to there being a precedent in the Lake District for permission allowing dual occupancy comprising permanent and holiday accommodation. However, the Council explain that in the case of guest house accommodation, which the appellant refers to, holiday accommodation already exists and a separate section of Policy 18 is applicable. The appellants' also refer to the 2003 planning application on this site, referred to above, which allowed for the conversion of the barn to a dwelling for permanent or holiday accommodation. However, although there may be little change to the fabric of the building during this time, this was over twenty years ago and different planning policies applied. Circumstances have changed and during the intervening time, the pressure for

¹ Lake District National Park Local Plan 2020-2035, Adopted May 2021.

housing has grown. From the information submitted, I do not consider that the circumstances are substantially comparable for either of these examples to establish precedence.

11. I agree with the parties that the building makes a positive contribution to the area, it is a traditional stone barn and its proximity to the road through Hall Dunnerdale means it is prominent. Such buildings contribute to the historical and cultural environment of the Lake District National Park. Bringing the building back into use would be a benefit. However, there is a lack of evidence that the building, as converted, would not be suitable for local occupancy. Also, whilst I appreciate the financial commitment involved in converting the building, no evidence has been submitted regarding the financial viability of the proposal. Therefore, the harm I have identified above outweighs the benefit the conversion would bring.

Conclusion

12. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. Consequently, the appeal should be dismissed.

J D Clark

INSPECTOR