



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 April 2025

by **C Livingstone MA(SocSci) (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5 June 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/C9499/W/24/3356215

Jacks Barn, Gunnerfleet Farm, Ingleton LA6 3AU

- 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 Ian Handley against the decision of Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref is C/45/670.
 - The development proposed is conversion of barn to residential.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - whether the proposed development is in a suitable location having regard to the policies of the development plan and its effect on the character and appearance of the Yorkshire Dales National Park;
 - the effect of the development on the significance of the building as a non-designated heritage asset; and
 - whether or not the development preserves the darkness of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Dark Sky Reserve (DSR).

Reasons

Location and Character and Appearance

3. The barn is located within a prominent and publicly visible position, close to the Ribbleshead Viaduct. From several viewpoints the building stands in isolation within the attractive dales landscape and is a significant distance from the nearest buildings within the steading at Gunnerfleet Farm. This part of the Yorkshire Dales National Park comprises of rolling fells and pastures separated by dry stone walls, interspaced with buildings, including field barns which are generally constructed from local stone.
4. In order to ensure that alternative uses for traditional buildings do not undermine the value that these buildings bring, the Park Authority allows for their conversion only when there are in locations that have capacity for the new use. In light of this Policy L2 specifies that the conversion of traditional buildings for use as a dwelling or holiday let would only be permitted within existing settlements and building groups, or other roadside locations.

5. As detailed above, the appeal site is located in the countryside and does not sit within a group of buildings. Therefore, the appeal site is not within a settlement or building group. The building is not directly adjacent to the road and based on the evidence before me, including my own observations on the ground, it is served by a track, visible as two wheel lines, which run to a sealed metalled road. Footnote 31 of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Local Plan 2015-2030 (LP) provides further guidance on what is considered a 'roadside location' and states that buildings that are served by an established (since at least 1st July 2014) unsealed road or track, will be considered subject to the impact on the landscape.
6. This approach reflects the National Planning Policy Framework (the framework) which supports the conversion of existing buildings as a means to support the rural economy and achieve sustainable growth and expansion of businesses in rural areas. However, the framework, also stipulates that in instances where the building is outside of an existing settlement it is important that development is sensitive to its surroundings.
7. As the track to the barn comprises two wheel lines it does not appear to be a well-established unsealed road or track and there is no substantive evidence before me to demonstrate that the track that serves the building was established prior to 2014. Further to this, on page 12 of the appellants Appeal Statement the track is referred to as temporary. As such, it has not been clearly demonstrated that the development accords with the requirements of Policy L2 in this regard.
8. The retention of the lean-to extension and the proposed additional openings move away from the simple and minimal openings typically associated with a building of this type. Further, the parking area, patio and hot tub, along with the proposed openings, would all contribute to the building appearing more domestic in character rather than agricultural. This impact is exacerbated by the buildings position separate from the steading, resulting in the erosion of the original character and appearance of the building and the positive contribution that it brings to the scenic qualities of the area. The dry stone boundary wall would provide some screening; however, it would not be sufficient to mitigate the resultant harm to the character and appearance of the area and surrounding landscape.
9. For the reasons detailed above the site is not in a suitable location for the development having regard to the policies of the development plan and its harmful effect on the character and appearance of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Therefore, the development is contrary to policies SP1, SP2, SP4, L2 and L3 of the LP which allow the conversion of traditional buildings to residential use only in specific circumstances and seek to conserve and enhance the natural beauty and cultural heritage and landscape character of the National Park through use of high quality design, appropriate landscaping, and removal of unsightly development.
10. Policy L1 of the LP relates to the protection of heritage assets and is not determinative in my assessment of this main issue.

Non-Designated Heritage Asset

11. The barn is a good example of a traditional field barn, although it is not listed it is identified as a non-designated heritage asset. Its significance is derived from its original form, scale, materials and detailing along with its links to historic agricultural practises which are one of the defining features of the area. The barn which is the subject of this appeal shows some signs of deterioration, particularly to

the roof, and it has a later lean-to extension on the side elevation which detracts from its original built form. Notwithstanding this, it appears to be in relatively good condition and incorporates traditional openings and stone walling.

12. The appeal scheme includes several alterations to the building to facilitate the proposed change of use. These include the retention and rendering of the lean-to extension, the installation of glazing across its end elevation and three large rectangular openings on the side elevation; which would serve an open plan living area. The scheme also includes the formation of a new opening on a currently blank elevation that faces the road and a parking and turning area, as well as a stone flag patio and hot tub which would be surrounded by the existing dry stone wall which would be restored.
13. In line with paragraph 216 of the Framework I am required to make a balanced judgment in assessing the effect of the development on the significance of the building as a NDHA, which should have regard to the scale of any harm and the asset's significance. The scheme would use traditional materials in the repair and restoration of the building which would be sensitive to its original built form. However, the proposal also includes the retention and alteration of the later extension and the introduction of several glazed openings. When these changes are considered alongside the proposed parking area, patio and hot tub, it would erode the buildings agricultural character and result in a considerable degree of harm to its significance as a NDHA.
14. The reuse of the redundant building would ensure that its condition does not deteriorate further, and the proposal would contribute to the supply of local housing or holiday accommodation in the area. This would bring economic benefits during construction and in general through the diversification of the appellants business. Furthermore, no additional extensions are proposed and the dry stone wall surrounding the building would be repaired. However, no substantive evidence has been provided to demonstrate that the conversion of the building could not be achieved, and the needs of the appellant met, in a more sensitive manner through a less intense use.
15. For the reasons detailed above the development would have a harmful effect on the significance of the building as a non-designated heritage asset. Therefore, the development is contrary to policies SP1, SP2, SP4, L1, L2 and L3 of the LP which allow the conversion of traditional buildings only in specific circumstances. Requiring that development responds positively to the site and conserves or enhances the historic environment and the cultural heritage of the National Park; and seeks to ensure that development that would harm the significance of an undesignated heritage asset should be subject to reasonable efforts to minimise harm.

Dark Sky Park

16. The Park Authority states that the appeal site is on or close to the boundary of the core area of the DSR. Policy SP4 of the LDP requires that developments do not give rise to unacceptable, adverse impacts in terms of the darkness of the night sky.
17. The scheme includes full height glazing and several windows that would serve an open plan living and dining area. As these windows would serve a main habitable room it is likely that future occupants would utilise artificial lighting in the hours of

darkness. Given the extent of the glazing serving the living area it is likely that lighting within this room would result in a high degree of light spill. This would be likely to have an unacceptable adverse impact on the darkness of the night sky. The dry stone wall may enclose the building and reduce light spill to a degree but given the height and extent of glazing proposed it would not mitigate the adverse effect of the development of the darkness of the DSR.

18. For the reasons detailed above the development would fail to preserve the darkness of the DSR. Therefore, the development is contrary to Policy SP4 of the LP which requires that development does not give rise to an unacceptable adverse impact on the darkness of the night sky.
19. Policies SP1, SP2, L1, L2 and L3 of the LP relate to sustainable development, the National Park purposes, heritage assets and the conversion of traditional buildings and are not determinative in my assessment of the effect of the darkness within the DSR.

Other Matters

20. The Park Authority has raised no concerns regarding the effect of the development on ecology or the amenity of neighbouring occupants. Based on the evidence before me I find no reason to disagree with the Park Authority. However, an absence of harm in these respects is a neutral factor weighing neither for nor against the development.
21. My attention has been drawn to an example of a similar barn conversion that was allowed by the Inspector¹. However, this development was considered against a different local plan and as such the circumstances in this example are not directly comparable to the appeal development.

Conclusion

22. The appeal scheme would conflict with the development plan. This conflict is not outweighed by other considerations. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

C Livingstone

INSPECTOR

¹ APP/C9499/W/22/3308878