



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 May 2025

by R Major BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 June 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/C9499/W/24/3356575

Disused water tank, land off Mitchell Lane, Settle

Grid Reference: Easting 382437 Northing 463189

- 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 Ms Julia Graham against the decision of Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref is C/62/108B.
 - The development proposed is conversion of a disused water tank into a domestic dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development in the banner heading is taken from the planning application form. However, I have removed the words "*Full planning permission seeking...*" and "*...on land off Mitchell Lane, Settle*" as these do not form part of the development.
3. Subsequent to the Authority issuing its decision the revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published on 12 December 2024. Both parties, within their respective submissions had an opportunity to comment on the revised Framework. Where reference is made to the Framework in this decision, the paragraph numbers are those that appear in the latest version.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - whether or not the appeal building is a 'traditional building' and whether or not it is capable of conversion without significant alteration;
 - the effect of the proposal on the Yorkshire Dales National Park, and the effect on the significance of the Settle Conservation Area;
 - whether or not the proposal would comply with the development plan's strategy for new housing; and
 - the effect of the development on highway safety, with particular regard to the access.

Reasons

Traditional building and conversion

5. The appeal relates to a partially underground disused reservoir building which is set into the hillside. The proposal seeks to convert the appeal building into a residential dwelling. Policy L2 of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Local Plan 2015 – 2030 (2016) (LP) relates to acceptable uses for the conversion of traditional buildings. Policy L3 of the LP relates to the building treatment for the conversion of traditional buildings.
6. Traditional buildings are defined within the LP glossary of terms as *“Buildings constructed at any time prior to the early to mid-twentieth century. During the first half of the twentieth century the use of mass manufactured building materials began to reach the National Park, but traditional methods of construction still persisted. They are typically of solid stone wall construction with flagged or slated roofs, incorporating natural and predominantly locally sourced materials”*.
7. Historic maps submitted in support of the appeal show a rectangular structure on this site in 1894 and 1907. However, the Authority contend that it is unclear as to whether the structure shown on the 1894 and 1907 maps is the same as the current building on site, with the Authority suggesting that the existing building could be a replacement constructed at a later date.
8. I have been provided with limited detailed evidence or analysis to demonstrate that the existing building on site is the one that is shown on the 1894 and 1907 maps. As such, on the evidence before me I cannot be sure that the appeal building was constructed prior to the early to mid-twentieth century.
9. Additionally, a submitted structural survey¹ details that the walls appear to be constructed from brickwork internally and stonework externally, with the stonework above ground level encased with concrete.
10. To that effect, I observed that the sections of the appeal building which are visible above ground level are finished in concrete, with light grey metal corrugated sheeting on the upper sections of the walls and roof. The Authority state that these metal corrugated roof sheets were installed in the 1970s and prior to this the reservoir was uncovered.
11. Consequently, whilst acknowledging that internally the walls are constructed from masonry, when observed externally the sections of the appeal building that are visible above the ground consist of no traditional features. From what I saw the building appears as a modern agricultural building, incorporating manufactured materials and lacking the features of a traditional building as defined in the LP.
12. In view of the above, I find that the appeal building does not meet the definition of a traditional building as set out in the LP.
13. As to whether the building is capable of conversion without significant alteration, the structural survey details that a visual assessment of the building was made, but no intrusive testing was carried out. The structural survey therefore states that the general condition of the reservoir tank appears to be reasonable, before acknowledging that the foundation construction is unknown.

¹ Wardell Armstrong – 21 April 2020 – Ref: AR/RW/LD10063/Letter Ref - 001

14. It also comments that if the walls and foundations are required to support new loads, then further structural investigation of the walls and the foundations would be recommended. Additionally, the survey states that further investigation of the slab construction would be required to assess its capacity to support the loads from the new walls.
15. The survey concludes that based on visual observations the tank is suitable for conversion with some changes to the existing structure, and that these will be fully assessed structurally and adequately designed at the detailed design stage. I have not however been presented with any further detailed information in respect of the suggested further works or assessments.
16. As such, based on the submitted evidence I am not convinced that the existing building is structurally or physically capable of conversion to the specific development that is before me without significant alteration, as required by LP policy L3.
17. Furthermore, given the lack of traditional features, including openings, within the external envelope of the building, I also find the appeal proposal would require significant alterations to the existing building to facilitate its proposed residential use. These include the removal of the existing external metal cladding and encasing concrete, along with the introduction of the significant number of new openings and a new roof. These works would be significant alterations.
18. In view of all the above, I conclude that the appeal building is not a traditional building and the proposal is therefore not supported by LP Policies L2 and L3 which both relate to the conversion of traditional buildings. Furthermore, on the evidence before me, the appeal building would require significant alterations to facilitate the proposed residential use. As such, the proposal would also be contrary to the requirement of LP Policy L3 for the building to have the physical capacity to accommodate the new use without significant alteration. This places the proposal in conflict with the development plan.

Character and appearance

National Park

19. The appeal site is located within the Yorkshire Dales National Park (YDNP). Under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (the National Parks Act), the two statutory purposes of National Parks are to:
 - conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage; and
 - promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of them by the public.
20. The National Parks Act requires me to seek to further these purposes. Government guidance² states that the duty means, amongst other factors, that as far as is reasonably practical, relevant authorities should seek to avoid harm and contribute to the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty, special qualities, and key characteristics of Protected Landscapes.

² Guidance for relevant authorities on seeking to further the purposes of Protected Landscapes – Dec 2024

21. Paragraph 189 of the Framework states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in the National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.
22. The special qualities, or aspects of the area's natural beauty which make the area distinctive, and which are considered valuable, are set out in the Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan 2019-24 (Management Plan). The qualities most relevant to the appeal site and its surroundings include the beautiful views of the dales, as well as the sloping pastures and valley grasslands used for livestock farming. These natural features, along with the nearby woodland set above the appeal site, create a highly distinctive landscape in this part of the YDNP.
23. The use of local materials which link to the area's geology is also prevalent in this area. Such materials are widespread on buildings, both within the nearby attractive settlement of Settle and isolated buildings on the landscape, as well as being prominent within the intricate network of drystone walls across the valley sides which define strong field patterns and minor roads.
24. In terms of its character, I observed that the appeal site and its surroundings exhibit a true sense of peace and tranquillity, and the Management Plan identifies dark night skies as a feature of this protected landscape.
25. The Management Plan includes six visions for the YDNP, one of which seeks to provide a distinctive, living, working cultural landscape that tells the ongoing story of generations of people interacting with their environment. Within this vision the Management Plan seeks to enhance local distinctiveness, maintain the National Park as a place where a true sense of tranquillity, remoteness and solitude can be found, and to obtain 'Dark Skies Reserve' status.
26. The Authority is currently in the process of preparing the Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan 2025-30 (Draft Management Plan), which has gone through its second round of consultation. I have therefore had due regard to the Draft Management Plan. It details that the special qualities of the YDNP and the six long term ambitions, as outlined within the current Management Plan, have been retained and reviewed. This includes maintaining the sense of tranquillity and remoteness, so as to retain 'Dark Skies Reserve' status which was designated in December 2020.
27. The proposal is not accompanied by a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment and my attention has not been drawn to any key views of the appeal site. Nevertheless, I observed that the appeal site is located on a steeply sloping raised section of the valley. It contains a disused reservoir building set into the hillside, with a significant proportion of the building located underground and therefore obscured from view. The site boundaries are defined by drystone walls.
28. From the section of Mitchell Lane which runs directly to the east and above the appeal site, only part of the metal clad roof of the appeal building is visible within the grassland that surrounds it. When viewed from sections of Mitchell Lane to the north and south, these elevated locations provide greater views of the whole of the roof and elements of the concrete encased side walls. From the public right of way that runs south of Mitchell Lane, a larger proportion of the building and its roof can be viewed.
29. Views of the west facing elevation of the building, protruding out from the sloping valley, can be seen from public vantage points within the settlement of Settle to the

south and west. Views from these directions are however sometimes obscured by trees situated on lower sections of the sloping valley to the southwest of the appeal building and site.

30. Nevertheless, a viewpoint from which I found the appeal site to be particularly prominent is from the highways of Duke Street and Halstead Terrace (B6480) to the west. This is the main road into the settlement when travelling from the south and between existing built development it provides elevated views towards the dales and the appeal site, over aspects of the existing settlement.
31. As discussed earlier, while the appeal building lacks traditional features, the appeal building and site currently represent innocuous features in this tranquil landscape. This is due to a combination of the building's modest protrusion out from the surrounding sloping valley which results in only a limited amount of it being visible, and the disused state of the site which is covered in grassland that assists in visually merging the site into the wider sloping valley. The low levels of activity and artificial lighting, arising from the appeal site also contribute to its low-key impact on the landscape.
32. In its present state, I find the appeal site therefore has a neutral effect on the character and appearance of the surrounding area and characteristics of the YDNP.
33. The proposal seeks to convert the disused reservoir building into a five-bedroom dwelling. This would involve the removal of the external concrete encasing from the masonry walls and the existing footprint of the building would not be increased. The submission states that the existing stonework beneath the concrete will be exposed if it is local stone³, however it is somewhat unclear what the main external finish of the proposed dwelling would be if the existing internal walls are not found to be a local stone. The submission also states that timber cladding and ashcrete will be used on the recessed section in the southwest corner.
34. The existing corrugated metal roof would be removed and replaced with a gentle sloping green roof, which would include two rows of solar panels and skylights. A section of the existing roof would not be replaced and this area would be left open at roof level to create an external sunken courtyard on the elevation facing towards the highway of Mitchell Lane. Due to the natural sloping gradient a stepped landscaped area would be created to connect the sunken courtyard and dwelling to the grasscrete car parking area to be located on the naturally higher eastern section of the site, between the building and the highway.
35. This stepped landscaped area, and the cars parked on this higher land level above the dwelling, would be prominently viewed from surrounding viewpoints, including from the raised highway of Mitchell Lane and the PROW to the southeast. Whilst the building would obscure views of the stepped landscaped area from lower viewpoints to the west, the cars parked on the higher land above the dwelling would be visible from these public vantage points.
36. I acknowledge the use of grasscrete surfacing and the green areas of the roof would retain the greenery on this raised and prominent section of the appeal site. Nevertheless, the proposed stepped landscaping area would introduce a significantly engineered area of man-made hardsurfacing into a currently green and natural landscape above the building.

³ Page 30 of the Design and Access Statement (Rev P4)

37. Furthermore, I observed on my visit that vehicles associated with other nearby properties were largely hidden or obscured from longer distance views. However, given the detached nature of the appeal site, and the significant change in land levels, the parking and movement of vehicles on the raised area of land above the proposed dwelling would be particularly prominent and visually harmful to the green and tranquil landscape.
38. Directly to the west of the building, excavation works will be undertaken to expose more of the elevation of the building facing down the sloping valley, increasing the prominence of this elevation from various vantage points. This elevation of the dwelling would have a modern and contemporary design, consisting of a high level of glazing, including a corner window feature.
39. This level of glazing would significantly increase the visual prominence of this elevation, and the appeal building as a whole, on the wider landscape. The high levels of glazing in this elevation would be contrary to the smaller window design and high solid to void ratio found in the more traditional buildings in this area. This would run contrary to the guidance in the Yorkshire Dales National Park Design Guide (Design Guide) where it states the design of new buildings should be informed by the characteristics of traditional buildings in the area.
40. Furthermore, and as mentioned above, there is some ambiguity over the external finish of the stonework which would be particularly prominent in this elevation. The proposed rows of projecting solar panels on the roof would also represent alien features within the landscape and potentially increase glare from the appeal property.
41. I therefore find the modern design of the dwelling would be at odds with the more traditional character and appearance of the surrounding properties and the defining features of the landscape within the YDNP. The appellant has drawn my attention to the nearby dwelling at Illingworth Barn which has a glazed extension of a more contemporary design. However, the submission states that this development replaced previous extensions on that property and I have been provided with very limited information as to what these previous extensions were or their visual impact on the landscape.
42. Nevertheless, I note that the property at Illingworth Barn largely retains its traditional appearance as a stone barn, with the contemporary element being an extension designed to accentuate the differences between the modern and traditional sections of the building. The appeal dwelling would however be a largely modern and contemporary design with few traditional design features that are a common characteristic to this part of the YDNP.
43. The proposed excavation works on the western side of the building would also create a level patio area adjacent to the dwelling, resulting in a further engineered area of man-made hardsurfacing which visually alters the natural sloping topography of the site. The installation of the pond would also require alterations to existing land levels.
44. The Design Guide identifies plot sizes as a feature which assists in understanding the locality of a landscape area. The proposed dwelling would have a substantially sized residential curtilage to the east and west of the building. This results in a residential plot size that is wholly out of keeping with other residential plot sizes in this locality. This substantial curtilage, including the new levelled, landscaped, patio

and parking areas, could potentially house a plethora of items of domestic paraphernalia.

45. Whilst permitted development rights could be removed by a planning condition, this would not prevent the installation of items associated with the proposed residential use, including washing lines, play equipment, outdoor furniture and ornaments etc... within these substantial areas.
46. As a result of the appeal site's prominent location on a rising section of the sloping valley and the substantial size of the proposed curtilage within the red line boundary, such items would cause significant visual harm to the tranquil character of the surrounding landscape. They would also detract from the visual appearance of the surrounding drystone walls which are a defining characteristic of this sloping valley.
47. In addition, the site's former use as a reservoir would have created low levels of activity in terms of comings and goings, and vehicle parking. These activities would have only reduced since the reservoir use ceased. Whilst the proposal is for only one dwelling, it would inevitably increase movements to, from and around the site, and result in vehicles being parked in this location, on a much more frequent basis. This increase in activities associated with the proposed residential use would also therefore cause a degree of harm to the tranquil character of the appeal site and its surroundings.
48. Furthermore, as the appeal site is physically detached from the settlement of Settle it benefits from darker night skies. The high levels of glazing proposed in the west facing elevation have the potential to negatively impact upon the dark night skies, which are a positive characteristic of the YDNP. I note that the submission details measures that can be put in place to minimise light pollution, however the use of the proposed dwelling would inevitably have a greater negative impact on dark night skies from the movement of vehicles and the comings and goings and activities of occupiers and visitors than the existing disused building and site.
49. In view of all the above, the appeal proposal as a whole would result in a development that is visually more prominent and harmful on this landscape than the existing development on the site. It would therefore run contrary to the advice within the Design Guide where it suggests that sites in a prominent position in the landscape may require a more considered response that harmonises with the landscape, rather than draws attention to it.
50. In coming to this view, I note that the replacement of the metal roof with a green roof would improve current views of the top section of the appeal building and the proposal includes new areas of drystone walling within the appeal site. However, these would not outweigh the significant harm I have identified that the appeal proposal would have upon the landscape and natural beauty of the YDNP.

Conservation Area

51. The appeal site is located outside, but adjacent to, the Settle Conservation Area (CA). The CA covers much of the historic core of the thriving historic market town and its significance in part derives from its many surviving 17th and 18th century buildings, including stone cottages and fine houses around steep and narrow lanes, which date from the town's early industrial and commercial origins. Close to the appeal site the CA incorporates several traditional properties on Mitchell Lane, identified as significant features in the historic development of Settle within the Settle

Conservation Area Appraisal (2008). Furthermore, the existing green and verdant setting of the land surrounding the tightly developed settlement of Settle distinguishes the built development from the surrounding rural activities in this area, and contributes to the significance of the CA.

52. The appeal site is visible from public vantage points within the CA, including from various points along the highway of Mitchell Lane, as well as between buildings on The Green. The site is also visible from many views looking towards the CA. From these viewpoints the appeal site is observed alongside various traditional properties which make a positive contribution to the CA.
53. As mentioned, overall the appeal site currently represents an innocuous feature on the landscape. While in the setting of the CA it has a neutral impact upon the significance of the CA. However, the modern design of the proposed dwelling and the associated external works that would take place within its substantial curtilage would be directly at odds with the traditional design of properties within the CA. It would also erode the green character that surrounds the CA and the legibility of its built boundary which contrasts with its bucolic setting and is part of its significance.
54. The Framework indicates that any harm to a designated heritage asset, including from development within its setting, should require clear and convincing justification. The proposal undermines the significance of the designated heritage asset, to the conservation of which, the Framework indicates, great weight should be given. The harm to the significance of the CA would be 'less than substantial'. Therefore, in accordance with paragraph 215 of the Framework, and LP Policy L1, this harm must be weighed against the public benefits.
55. I note one of the objectives of the Management Plan was to support the completion of 400 dwellings by 2024, and the Draft Management Plan seeks to support the completion of 250 dwellings by 2030. I have not however been provided with information about the Authority's 5-years supply of deliverable housing sites. Nevertheless, and notwithstanding such a position, the public benefits arising from the contribution of one dwelling on this previously developed site would be limited.
56. In economic terms, public benefits would arise from the proposal, including contributions to the local economy during the conversion and construction phases of the development. These however would be short term benefits. Further economic benefits would also arise from additional spending in the wider area by future occupants of the dwelling. Cumulatively, given the scale of development the economic support to the area arising from the appeal proposal would be relatively small. I therefore attach limited weight in respect of the economic benefits to the public.
57. The proposal would provide an opportunity to increase the overall biodiversity of the site and the submission states that the dwelling would achieve high levels of energy efficiency. These are public benefits. However, the Authority have commented that some of the proposed biodiversity net gain would be provided off-site and there is no mechanism before me, by way of a planning obligation, to secure this off-site provision. Additionally, there is no energy statement before me to demonstrate the exact energy efficiency level that the proposed dwelling would achieve. This therefore limits the weight I can attribute to these environmental matters as public benefits in favour of the appeal.

58. In view of my findings above, whilst there are public benefits that weigh in favour of the appeal scheme, the public benefits arising from the appeal proposal would not outweigh the harm I have identified. Thus, the proposal would conflict with the Framework and LP Policy L1.

Conclusion on National Park and Conservation Area

59. I conclude that overall the proposed development would not be sensitive to the special characteristics of the YDNP and would not conserve and enhance its natural beauty. The proposal therefore conflicts with LP Policies SP2, SP4 and CC1 where they require, among other things, that developments further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the National Park; respond positively to their surrounding context and landscape setting; that design is high quality and reinforces local distinctiveness; that proposals involving renewable and low carbon technologies do not adversely affect the National Park's special qualities; and that alterations to buildings, and the creation of any new curtilage, are the minimum necessary and are sensitive to the traditional character and appearance of buildings and do not adversely affect the immediate or wider landscape setting of the building.
60. The proposal would also conflict with paragraph 189 of the Framework which gives National Parks the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty to the conservation and enhancement of which it indicates great weight should be given. More significantly, it would conflict with the statutory duty to seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the YDNP.
61. The proposal would also undermine the significance of the adjacent CA and the public benefits would not outweigh this harm. The proposal therefore fails to accord with LP Policy L1 which states that development proposals affecting a designated heritage asset will be permitted provided they conserve or enhance its significance; and that proposals that result in less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the public benefits of the proposal clearly outweigh the loss of significance. The development also fails to satisfy the relevant sections within chapter 16 of the Framework.

Housing Strategy

62. LP Policy SP3 states that new development will be located within or adjacent to the settlements listed in Table 1, unless there are justifiable reasons why another location is more sustainable. With specific regard to new housing this policy states that new build housing will be permitted on allocated sites and inside the housing development boundaries of local service centres and service villages in Table 1. The settlement of Settle is identified as a local service centre in Table 1.
63. The submitted evidence states that the appeal site is located approximately 130m outside the Settle housing development boundary. Based on this evidence and my observations on site, I find that the appeal site is physically and visually detached from this housing development boundary, with open green fields, and a small number of scattered detached dwellings, situated in-between. Consequently, I conclude that the appeal site is not adjacent to the settlement of Settle.
64. I note that LP Policy SP3 also states that to help conserve the historical landscape, promote growth on the local economy and increase the supply of housing, the re-

use of suitable traditional buildings will be permitted in accordance with Policies L2 and L3. However, for the reasons given earlier I have concluded that the appeal building is not a traditional building and therefore the scheme is not supported by LP Policies L2 and L3.

65. In respect of paragraph 84 of the Framework, whilst located outside the settlement, the appellant states that the development would not represent an isolated home. The appellant has not advanced that the appeal proposal would meet any of the applicable circumstances set out in paragraph 84 of the Framework, and I have no reason to disagree.
66. In view of the above, the proposed residential development of this site, outside and not adjacent to the housing development boundary, would be contrary to LP Policy SP3 and this weighs against the proposal.

Highway Safety

67. Access to the proposed dwelling would be via the existing access from Mitchell Lane. I observed on site that visibility when exiting this access is restricted looking north (left) by a drystone wall and trees/vegetation. When looking south (right) visibility is restricted by a stone building set close to the highway.
68. The appeal submission is supported by a Proof of Evidence⁴ and there appears to be agreement between the parties that visibility at this access could be improved by moving the access further away from the adjacent roadside building to the south, and reducing the height of the wall and vegetation to the north.
69. The submitted plans show that this wall and vegetation are within the appeal site, and therefore a reduction in their height to provide an improved visibility splay could be secured by planning condition, had I been minded to allow the appeal.
70. However, the submitted plans clearly show that the existing access would be utilised and it would not be appropriate for me, as part of this appeal, to consider other potential access points which have not been shown or considered by the Authority. As such, I have assessed the suitability of the access based on the location shown on the submitted plans.
71. In this regard, Mitchell Lane is a single width track which starts at the junction with Albert Hill and it has a bound surface outside the appeal site. The appellant's Proof of Evidence states that Mitchell Lane is not a through road and I observed a traffic sign to that effect.
72. The appellant's submission also details that beyond the access to the appeal site Mitchell Lane serves agricultural land, a picnic area and the Yorkshire Water facility at Reservoir Farm, with the picnic area only likely to be accessed by people on foot or cycle due to a lack of any car parking provision along Mitchell Lane. Furthermore, I noted that the access to Reservoir Farm was located close to the appeal site access, on the opposite side of the road. As such, when vehicles exit the appeal site they will be able to see any vehicles leaving Reservoir Farm.
73. The appellant's submission states that during a 5-hour period only 2no. vehicles passed the site, along with a cyclist and 12no. pedestrians. Whilst my site visit on a weekday morning was only a snapshot, I observed 1no. vehicle using the section of

⁴ Proof of Evidence Rev A – Exigo Project Solutions – October 2024

Mitchell Lane outside the appeal site, and this was simply to turn around. I also observed a single pedestrian walking past the appeal site during my visit.

74. As such, on the evidence before me and my own observations, I find that Mitchell Lane is a very lightly trafficked highway and given its rural and narrow nature vehicles will likely be travelling at low speed when using this section of the highway. The submission also states that there are no recorded Personal Injury Accidents along Mitchell Lane.
75. In view of all the above, whilst I acknowledge that visibility at the access point is currently restricted, visibility when looking north could be improved via a planning condition requiring a reduction in the height of the stone wall and vegetation, were I minded to allow the appeal.
76. As a result of the nearby building, visibility to the south cannot be improved. Nevertheless, the access is relatively wide, and this would allow a driver exiting the appeal site an opportunity to position the car slightly further away from this nearby building, thus improving visibility when looking south. This, along with a combination of the very low number of vehicles using the section of highway outside the appeal site; the likely low speed of vehicles; and the lack of any recorded Personal Injury Accidents, draws me to conclude that the existing access is suitable to serve the increase in vehicle movements associated with the appeal proposal for a single dwelling.
77. The development would therefore not have a harmful impact upon highway safety and I find no conflict with LP Policy SP4 where it seeks to ensure, among other things, that development proposals have appropriate access and do not prejudice highway safety. Also, the proposal would satisfy the Framework where it seeks to ensure that safe and suitable access can be achieved and where it states that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

Other Matters

78. Whilst not included as a reason for refusal on the decision notice or detailed within the Officer Report, the Authority's Appeal Statement makes reference to a requirement for a planning obligation to secure off-site biodiversity net gain and a local occupancy restriction for the dwelling. No planning obligation has been provided by the appellant and as I am dismissing the appeal on the main issues, I have not pursued this matter further.

Planning Balance

79. Notwithstanding the above identified conflict with the relevant LP policies, LP Policy SP1 states that the Authority will presume in favour of development that is sustainable. Therefore, and in order to consider sustainability issues in the round, consideration must also be given to the three⁵ dimensions of sustainability in paragraph 7 of the Framework.
80. In respect of environmental sustainability, the evidence before me is that the appeal site is located approximately 130m from the Settle housing development boundary. I do not doubt that a number of journeys would be undertaken using the private car. However, I found that there are a number of services and facilities on the high street within this nearby settlement which could be reached on foot.

⁵ Economic, social and environmental

81. I acknowledge that there were no footways or streetlights along the highway connecting the appeal site to this settlement. However, I observed during my visit that due to the rural nature of the village not all highways within the settlement benefit from footways, and very few had streetlights.
82. As such, given the walking distance, and the quiet nature of the highways, I find that local services and facilities would be accessible from the appeal site, without significant reliance on the private motor vehicle. The proposal would also make use of previously developed land and provide an opportunity to increase biodiversity and provide an energy efficient dwelling. Cumulatively, I give these environmental matters moderate weight in favour of the proposal. I find the social and economic benefits arising from the provision of one dwelling would be limited.
83. However, for the reasons given earlier I have found that the proposal would lead to environmental harm in terms of its effect upon the character and natural beauty of the YDNP and the significance of the CA. I consider this harm would be significant.
84. In view of the above, the proposed residential development would not be within or adjacent to the housing development boundary and would not accord with the spatial strategy for new development, as outlined in LP Policy SP3. Whilst I have found that the site would not be particularly remote from day-to-day services and facilities in terms of walking, significant harm would be caused to the special character and natural beauty of the YDNP. The proposal would also undermine the significance of the CA, to which great weight should be given to its conservation.
85. The identified harm to the YDNP and the CA, and the conflict with the Authority's development strategy for housing, are overriding concerns and the benefits identified do not outweigh these harms. I therefore conclude that the proposal would not amount to a sustainable form of development and accordingly would not accord with LP Policy SP1, and the Framework.

Conclusion

86. The proposed development would not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety. However, for the reasons given, I have concluded that the appeal building is not a 'traditional building' and would not be capable of conversion without significant alteration. Furthermore, the proposal would not comply with the development plan's strategy for new housing, would have a harmful impact upon the natural beauty of the YDNP and undermine the significance of the CA.
87. The proposal therefore conflicts with the development plan taken as a whole, as well as the statutory duty within the National Parks Act for me to further the purposes of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the YDNP. There are no material considerations, including the Framework, to suggest the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, for the reasons given, the appeal is dismissed.

R Major

INSPECTOR