



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 June 2025

by F P Tinsley MA (Hons) MBA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15th September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/U2750/W/25/3363983

Low Farm Stables, Camela Lane, Camblesforth, Selby YO8 8HA

- 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 John Watson against the decision of North Yorkshire Council.
 - The application reference is ZG2023/1062/FUL
 - The development proposed is described as 'conversion of an existing agricultural barn into a dwelling, together with associated car parking.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for conversion of an existing agricultural barn into a dwelling, together with associated car parking at Low Farm Stables, Camela Lane, Camblesforth, Selby YO8 8HA in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref ZG2023/1062/FUL, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have adopted the description of development provided in the Council's Decision Notice, as the original description on the planning application form referred to a two-bedroom dwelling. During the course of the planning application, the design of the proposed development was amended, resulting in a reduction to a single bedroom dwelling.

Main Issues

3. The main issues in this case are:
 - Whether the appeal site would provide a suitable location for the proposed dwelling, with particular regard to whether the existing structure is suitable for conversion to residential use.
 - The effect of the development on the character and appearance of the countryside.
 - Whether the appeal site would provide a suitable location for the proposed dwelling, with particular regard to flood risk.

Reasons

Location of the Proposal

4. Paragraph 84(c) of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) allows for the development of isolated homes in the countryside which would reuse redundant or disused buildings and enhance their immediate setting.
5. Saved Policy H12 of the Selby District Local Plan 2005 (the Local Plan) provides criteria for when proposals for the conversion of rural buildings to residential use in the countryside (outside defined Development Limits) will be permitted.
6. The appeal site is located on the edge of a farmstead known as Low Farm Stables, situated on Camela Lane near the settlement of Camblesforth. It is predominantly enclosed and is currently used for informal purposes associated with the farmstead. At the time of my site visit, several items were being stored on the land, including a skip. Although the site lies within open countryside, it forms part of a cluster of buildings that includes a number of residential properties. It is not isolated, but for the purposes of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and the application of saved Local Plan Policy H12, it is considered to be located within the countryside.
7. The structure proposed for conversion is located within a small field, accessed internally from the farmstead. It is a single-storey timber structure of robust construction, enclosed on three sides as a field shelter with an open elevation facilitating access. At present, it is used for informal storage.
8. The Council argues that the existing structure on the appeal site does not constitute a building, on the basis that it lacks four enclosing walls, and refers to a dictionary definition in support—although the specific source of this definition has not been identified. However, I have not been provided with a compelling argument to substantiate the claim that the structure does not qualify as a building. From my observations during the site visit, I am satisfied that the structure constitutes a building: it is clearly of substantial and permanent construction, has existed on the site for more than a temporary period, and fulfils the function of providing shelter—consistent with the ordinary understanding of a building.
9. The building is of traditional timber construction and is typical of structures found within a farmstead cluster. It reflects the rural character of the surrounding area, and has limited architectural or historic interest. Nonetheless, its retention would reinforce the rural character of the cluster. In this respect, I attach moderate weight to the benefit of retaining the building.
10. The proposed conversion has been designed sympathetically, taking account of the character and integrity of the existing structure. The works would take place entirely within the footprint and envelope of the existing building. The current roofing material would be retained, and the timber cladding would be continued across the open side of the structure to form the new principal elevation of the dwelling. Overall, the proposal would preserve the fabric and character of the building.
11. A key issue raised is whether the existing building is capable of conversion without substantial rebuilding. While it is evident that the structure was originally intended for agricultural use and has been constructed as such, from my observations, I consider it to be of a sufficiently robust construction and scale to allow for conversion to a timber framed dwelling. The Council has stated that insufficient information was submitted with the application to enable them to reach a firm conclusion on this matter. However, I have reviewed the structural survey

prepared by Tillett Consulting Engineers, which was lodged with the application. This concludes that no further structural intervention is required to facilitate the building's conversion to a dwelling and reinforces my opinion in this regard. In the absence of any contrary evidence from the Council, I am satisfied that the existing building is suitable for conversion.

12. The proposal would provide a reasonable means of conserving a building which contributes to the established rural character of the cluster and as such has some though very limited architectural or historic interest in this regard. The buildings retention subject to the sympathetic conversion proposed, would reinforce the rural character of the cluster.
13. For these reasons, the proposal accords with saved Policy H12 of the Local Plan, which amongst other things requires that proposals for the conversion of rural buildings to residential use in the countryside (outside defined Development Limits) will only be permitted where: would not damage the fabric and character of the building; the building is structurally sound and capable of reuse without substantial rebuilding; the proposed re-use or adaptation will generally take place within the fabric of the building and will not require extensive alteration, rebuilding and/or extension.

Character and Appearance

14. The Council contends that the creation of a separate residential unit on this site would be harmful to the character and appearance of the open countryside, and is therefore contrary to the Framework and saved Policy H12 of the Local Plan.
15. The site is largely screened from Camela Lane by a mature hedgerow. Given the presence of the existing building and the informal use of the land in connection with the farmstead, the site does not possess the character of open, undeveloped countryside. Instead, it visually and functionally relates to the existing cluster of development at Low Farm Stables. The site presently appears somewhat untidy and does not make a positive contribution to the visual quality of the area. In this context, I do not consider the proposal would result in harm to the character and appearance of the open countryside.
16. The proposed development would not significantly alter the appearance of the building when viewed from outside the appeal site. The introduction of a driveway would, to a limited degree, reinforce the sense that the site forms part of the established farmstead.
17. The overall impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area would be limited. Importantly, the retention and sympathetic treatment of the existing design features of the building would help mitigate any visual impact and preserve the rural character of the site.
18. The development would not result in harm to the character and appearance of the area and would accord with saved Policy H12 of the Local Plan, which seeks to ensure that conversions of rural buildings do not cause significant adverse effects on local character. I also find that the proposal meets the design requirements of Policy ENV1 of the Local Plan and Selby District Core Strategy Local Plan 2013 (the Core Strategy) Policy SP19, which amongst other things require high-quality design that respects local character, identity, and context. I find that the proposal would involve the reuse of a redundant, modestly sized building and would

enhance its immediate setting. As such, it would comply with paragraph 84 of the Framework in this regard.

Flood Risk

19. The appeal site is located within Flood Zone 3, which is defined as having a 1% or greater annual probability of river flooding or a 0.5% or greater annual probability of sea flooding. Core Strategy Policy SP15 seeks to avoid development in areas of flood risk and requires the application of the Sequential Test when assessing development proposals. However, the Framework clarifies that changes of use are not subject to the Sequential Test, although they must still be supported by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA).
20. A site-specific Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted with the application. This demonstrates that the proposal addresses the requirements of paragraph 181 of the NPPF in relation to flood risk mitigation. Relevant statutory consultees have recommended measures that would make the proposal acceptable in terms of flood risk. These measures can be secured through appropriate planning conditions.
21. For these reasons, the proposed development is considered to be in accordance with the Framework with regard to flood risk. Given the significant conflict between Core Strategy Policy SP15 and the Framework, limited weight is afforded to Policy SP15 in this instance.

Conditions

22. I have considered the conditions proposed by the Council against the tests set out in the Framework. Where necessary, I have amended their wording in the interests of clarity and effectiveness. The appellant has had the opportunity to review and comment on the Council's suggested conditions.
23. In the interests of certainty, I have imposed standard conditions relating to the commencement of development and adherence to the approved plans.
24. To maintain the character and appearance of the area, it is necessary to require the submission of details concerning the materials to be used in the external surfaces of the development.
25. In order to safeguard the amenity of nearby residents, I have imposed a condition restricting the hours during which development works, including demolition or preparatory activity, may take place.
26. To address issues relating to land contamination and stability. Conditions are imposed to ensure the site is suitable for its proposed use by requiring investigation, risk assessment, appropriate remediation measures, and verification that any necessary measures have been implemented.
27. I have also imposed a condition requiring soakaway tests to be carried out, with development to proceed in accordance with the agreed drainage details. This is necessary to ensure that the site can be adequately drained.
28. To prevent future changes that could undermine the character and appearance of the development and detract from the rural appearance, permitted development

rights are removed for the erection of additional buildings or structures within the curtilage of the dwelling.

29. Finally, a condition requires the development to be carried out in accordance with the submitted Flood Risk Assessment and associated mitigation measures. This is to minimise the risk of flooding and potential harm to future occupants.

Conclusion

30. For the reasons given above, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I allow this appeal.

F P Tinsley

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within three years of the date of this permission.
2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
 - Plan ref: ADP23/P119/01 Rev A – Location Plan – Received 27th March 2024.
 - Plan ref: ADP23/P119/02 Rev C – Proposed Site Layout - Received 13th May 2024.
 - Plan ref: ADP23/P119/04 Rev A – Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations - Received 13th May 2024.
 - Plan ref: ADP23/P119/05 Rev B – Ground Plan in Context - Received 13th May 2024.
3. The external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be constructed in the materials shown on plan no. ADP23/P119/04A.
4. No work relating to the development hereby approved, including works of demolition or preparation prior to building operations, shall take place other than between the hours of 08:00 hours and 18:00 hours Mondays to Fridays and 08:00 hours to 13:00 hours on Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or Bank or National Holidays.
5. Prior to commencement of development (excluding demolition), a site investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken to assess the nature, scale and extent of any land contamination and the potential risks to human health, groundwater, surface water and other receptors. A written report of the findings must be produced and is subject to approval in writing by the Local Planning Authority. It is strongly recommended that the report is prepared by a suitably qualified and competent person.
6. Where remediation works are shown to be necessary, development (excluding demolition) shall not commence until a detailed remediation strategy has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The remediation strategy must demonstrate how the site will be made suitable for its intended use and must include proposals for the verification of the remediation works. It is strongly recommended that the report is prepared by a suitably qualified and competent person.
7. Prior to first occupation or use, remediation works should be carried out in accordance with the approved remediation strategy. On completion of those works, a verification report (which demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation carried out) must be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. It is strongly recommended that the report is prepared by a suitably qualified and competent person.
8. In the event that unexpected land contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development, it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken

and, if remediation is necessary, a remediation strategy must be prepared, which is subject to approval in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation strategy, a verification report must be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. It is strongly recommended that all reports are prepared by a suitably qualified and competent person.

9. Prior to commencement of the development soakaway tests are to be provided to demonstrate that soakaways are a suitable method of surface water disposal. The development shall then proceed in accordance with the agreed details.
10. Notwithstanding the provisions of Class A to Class E to Schedule 2, Part 1 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended) no extensions, garages, outbuildings or other structures shall be erected, without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.
11. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted flood risk assessment referenced 'Flood Risk Assessment - Nov 23' and dated 6th November 2023, and the mitigation measures it details. These mitigation measures shall be fully implemented prior to occupation and subsequently in accordance with the scheme's details. The measures detailed above shall be retained and maintained thereafter throughout the lifetime of the development.

******End Of Schedule******