
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 August 2025

by N Teasdale BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/M9496/W/25/3363039

Barn and Croft to east of Robin Hey off B6465, Main Road, Wardlow, Buxton SK17 8RP

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant full planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr & Mrs Anthony and Judy Darwent against the decision of Peak District National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref is NP/DDD/1224/1362.
 - The development proposed is conversion of agricultural barn to open market dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for conversion of agricultural barn to open market dwelling at Barn and Croft to east of Robin Hey off B6465, Main Road, Wardlow, Buxton SK17 8RP in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref NP/DDD/1224/1362, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Main Issue

2. The main issue of the appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area, including whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Wardlow Conservation Area (CA) and preserve the setting of the non-designated heritage asset (the barn).

Reasons

3. The appeal site relates to a field barn located in Wardlow to the east of Main Road towards the southern end of the village. The barn is located to the north of the field parcel approximately 13 metres into the field to the east and faces to the south. There is also a dewpond located within the same field parcel to the southwest of the barn.

4. Wardlow is a low-density historic settlement developed in a ribbon-form along Main Road. It sits in the limestone village farmlands section of the White Peak. This area is characterised by: pastoral farmland enclosed by drystone walls made from limestone; a repeating pattern of narrow strip fields originating from medieval open fields; discrete limestone villages and clusters of stone dwellings; localised field dewponds. All of which contribute to the significance of the CA.

5. The barn itself is a traditionally built field barn constructed from limestone with gritstone detailing under a profiled sheet roof covering on steel purlins. The barn is relatively plain, featuring 2 timber doors and a hopper style window. There is a lean-to on the eastern side of the building which is constructed from concrete blockwork and corrugated tin roof. Historically there were more structures on this plot that exists today.

6. The proposed development seeks planning permission to convert the barn into an open-market dwelling. The blockwork lean-to would be removed and replaced with a gritstone faced extension under a stone slate roof. The proposed development would replace the windows and doors, in addition to the installation of two rooflights on the northern roof slope. A new hardstanding access and car parking bays would be constructed from limestone gravel, apart from the access from the roadside which would be a mix of tarmac to the threshold and limestone cobble stones once in the site. A new gritstone wall is proposed to the south of the dwelling to contain the proposed dwelling's residential curtilage allowing the croft to the south to remain as a wildflower meadow.

7. As set out, the appeal site is located within the CA and by virtue of the barn's age and function in the agricultural landscape, in addition to it being the only structure remaining on site, it is considered that the barn is a non-designated heritage asset. This is reflective of the local area's vernacular and building tradition for agricultural buildings. The barn makes a positive contribution to the street scene, in addition to the CA, particularly in the context of Wardlow's visible medieval field layout.

8. I have a duty under Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA. I have also had regard to paragraph 212 of the Framework which explains that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Paragraph 216 also explains that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

9. The proposed conversion of the barn would utilise the shell of the existing building and include only one new external opening to the new stone wall of the eastern lean-to and two conservation rooflights on the northern roof slope. The interventions to the building are minor and would not impact its character. The most significant alteration to the building is the proposed rebuilding of the eastern lean-to. At present, the lean-to is constructed from concrete blocks and metal sheeting. The proposed development would rebuild it in the same size but from more traditional materials, limestone and grey stone roof. The provision of a more sensitively designed extension would not harm or interfere with its historic legibility or agricultural character. It is therefore considered that the barn's significance would be conserved as a result of the extension. The above-mentioned works would visually maintain the agricultural appearance of the barn conversion within this rural area.

10. In order to facilitate the conversion, the appellant proposes a tarmac and limestone cobbled access track from Main Road, the provision of two carparking bays to the east of the barn, and the construction of a wall to the south to contain the proposed dwellings residential curtilage.

11. The site already benefits from an access point to the west which allows access to be gained through to the adjacent fields via gated entrances. Based on the evidence before me and my own observations on site, it is clear that a twin wheeled track has existed in the past although this is less visible today. To this end, and whilst the proposed access would be a more formalised access, it would continue to be a twin

wheeled track of largely agricultural appearance with central grass verge from Main Street. It would be to the northern part of the site close to the existing stone wall and building in order to appear inconspicuous in the landscape and would be relatively limited in length as to not be obtrusive. A modest property curtilage is proposed which would be enclosed by stone walling. This would help to screen the access and parking for the property.

12. Notwithstanding the above, limited views are available of this part of the site when approaching the site from the north given the stone walling and building positioning. Limited views are also available when approaching the site from the south given the combination of stone walling, trees and the dewpond. Additionally, the land falls from south to north and the land slopes slightly downwards towards the field to the northeast which further restricts views of this part of the site. This, together with the proposed stone walling to the south would mean that such works would only be visible from limited vantage points when approaching from the south where its overall impact would be limited. The car parking is proposed to be tucked away to the eastern side of the building and thus would largely be hidden from views. On this basis, the access and parking would not have an urbanising impact on the barn and would have limited impact on how the field barn is read within the landscape.

13. The National Park explain that the prevailing form of Wardlow (particularly on the eastern side of Main Road) is properties fronting onto the street with narrow strip-fields extending to the east. At my site visit, I observed that the built form on this side of the road varied somewhat where buildings also sit perpendicular to the road at various set back positions. Parking arrangements along with residential curtilages also varied and a number of formal access points can be seen along Main Road. The proposed development would not therefore sit at odds with this built form nor appear out of keeping in this setting. The site is surrounded by various stone walls which is characteristic of the area and there is already a stone wall to the east running north to south which subdivides the strip field to the east by cutting across the field. The proposed stone wall to the south would not therefore be out of keeping in this setting nor detrimentally affect the visible field layout particularly as this field has already been subdivided and many stone walls are multidirectional and cut across fields.

14. Overall, the barn would continue to sit within a viewpoint which encompasses its historic field boundaries to the northeast and would continue to be read as a simple utilitarian building making a positive contribution to the street scene and CA. The boarding on the lean-to extension would not despoil this given that this covers a very small section of the building and is a minor element to the overall design. The proposed development would result in a one bedroomed property and would not intensify the site to a degree that would be visually harmful to the historic landscape setting. This is even considering when the amenity space is used in connection with the residential use which would in any case be largely screened by the proposed stone walling and thus would not be prominent in the landscape.

15. Providing a beneficial use for the building that retains the building, and its simple architectural style is considered consistent with paragraph 210 of the Framework which explains that local planning authorities should take account of: a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation.

16. I note the National Park's concerns regarding light spillage and do not dispute that the area immediately surrounding the building is open and undeveloped. However,

there are several other properties within close proximity of the site as well as streetlamps whereby lighting would inevitably be apparent in the evenings. Light spillage from the building would be limited given the limited openings. It would not therefore result in a greater level of harm over and above that of other residential dwellings nearby as it would be viewed in context and not visually strident. Any external lighting can also be conditioned to ensure that it is not overly prominent.

17. The Officer's report explains that the site has strong potential for below ground heritage assets of archaeological interest, and I have had due regard to the consultee response received from the National Park's Archaeology team regarding the significance and impact. Based on the information before me, which is limited in relation to such matters, I am not sufficiently satisfied that this would warrant a reason for refusal particularly given that measures in relation to archaeological work can be imposed to mitigate against this. Notwithstanding, finding a viable use for the non-designated heritage asset would weigh in favour of the scheme.

18. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposed development would not unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area. It would therefore preserve the character and appearance of the CA. It would also preserve the setting of the non-designated heritage asset (the barn). Accordingly, I find the proposed development to accord with Policies L1 and L3 of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document, 2011 and Policies DMC5, DMC8 and DMC10 of the Development Management Policies, 2019. Together, amongst other matters, such policies require development to conserve and where appropriate enhance or reveal the significance of archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic assets and their settings, including statutory designations and other heritage assets of international, national, regional or local importance or special interest.

19. For the same reasons, the proposed development would also accord with chapter 12 of the Framework relating to achieving well-designed places as well as chapters 15 and 16 which relates to conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment.

Conditions

20. I have considered the National Park's suggested planning conditions in their Statement of Case and in light of the Framework and Planning Practice Guidance. As a result, I have amended these where necessary for clarity.

21. I agree that the standard time for commencement of development is necessary as well as a plans condition in the interests of certainty. A Written Scheme of Investigation for archaeological work is necessary in the interests of Archaeology. Works relating to rebuilding is necessary to ensure the conversion of the building and in the interests of heritage and visual amenity. The suggested condition has however been amended to reflect the details contained on the plans.

22. Conditions relating to the access and hardstanding areas are necessary to ensure such is modified prior to the occupation of the dwelling and also in the interests of visual amenity. Conditions relating to materials, detailing and lighting are necessary to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the site and in the interests of heritage. A condition requiring compliance with the Ecology Survey and a scheme for crevice roosting opportunities for birds are necessary in the interests of ecology. A condition relating to the wildflower seed mix is necessary in the interests of landscaping of the site and ecology. A condition relating to the package treatment plant details is necessary to ensure the effectiveness of the treatment and for drainage of the site. A

condition relating to air source heat pumps is necessary in the interests of energy efficiency and sustainability. A condition relating to alterations to the external appearance of the dwelling is necessary in the interests of visual amenity and heritage.

Conclusion

23. For the above reasons and having had regard to the development plan as a whole, the appeal is allowed subject to conditions.

N Teasdale

INSPECTOR

SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Location Plan. Drawing No. 420B_PL001; Site Block Plan Drawing No. 420B_PL002; Proposed Ground Floor Drawing No. 420B_PL006; Proposed Roof and Landscape Plan Drawing No. 420B_PL007; Proposed Elevations Drawing No. 420B_PL008; Package Treatment Plant Details Drawing No. 420B_PL009.

- 3) A) No development shall take place until a Written Scheme of Investigation for archaeological work has been submitted to and approved by the National Park Authority in writing, and until any pre-start element of the approved scheme has been completed to the written satisfaction of the National Park Authority. The scheme shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and
 1. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording;
 2. The programme for post investigation assessment;
 3. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording;
 4. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation;
 5. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation;
 6. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organization to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation.B) No development shall take place other than in accordance with the archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition (a).
C) The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition (a) and the provision to be made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured.
- 4) The conversion of the barn shall not be carried out other than within the shell of the existing building except where specified on the approved plans or in complete accordance with a detailed scheme which shall be first submitted to and approved in writing by the National Park Authority.
- 5) The existing access to Main Road shall be modified in accordance with the approved plans before the dwelling is first occupied, laid out, constructed and maintained in perpetuity free from any impediment to its designated use.
- 6) The proposed area of hardstanding within the curtilage of the appeal site shall be used for the parking and manoeuvring of vehicles clear of the highway and shall be maintained free of any impediment to its designated use.

- 7) Prior to work commencing on the roof, a sample of the grey stone slate shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the National Park Authority. Thereafter the roof shall be clad in full accordance with the approved sample.
- 8) All new stonework on the new lean-to shall be natural rubble coursed limestone, laid and pointed to match the existing. A one metre square sample panel of the stonework shall be prepared on site and made available for inspection. The panel shall then be approved in writing by the National Park Authority. Once approved all new stonework shall be in full accordance with the approved sample panel.
- 9) The roof verges shall be flush cement pointed, with no barge boards or projecting timberwork.
- 10) All soil vent pipes shall be completely internal.
- 11) Prior to the erection/provision of any timberwork, including doors and windows, a detailed scheme for the external finish of the timberwork shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the National Park Authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved specification and the timberwork shall be permanently so maintained.
- 12) The pointing to all new external stonework shall be bag or brush-rubbed and slightly recessed from the external face of the stonework.
- 13) Before any work commences on external lighting, a lighting scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the National Park Authority. Thereafter any external lighting shall be in full accordance with the approved scheme.
- 14) The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the submitted Ecology Survey (Dunelm Ecology, November 2023).
- 15) Prior to first occupation, a scheme for crevice roosting opportunities for birds shall be carried out in full accordance with a scheme which shall be first submitted to and approved in writing by the National Park Authority.
- 16) Prior to first occupation, the wildflower seed mix specified in paragraph 4.4.7 of the Ecology Report shall be seeded and maintained in accordance with the approved details unless an alternative wildflower mix and maintenance is first agreed in writing by the National Park Authority.
- 17) The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the submitted Package Treatment Plant Details '420B_PL009' and shall be fully operational before first occupation of the dwelling.
- 18) Prior to first occupation of the dwelling, the air-source heat pump shall be installed and fully operational in accordance with a specification first agreed in writing by the National Park Authority.

- 19) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 1995 (or any order revoking or re-enacting that Order) no alterations to the external appearance of the dwelling shall be carried out and no extensions, porches, ancillary buildings, solar PV panels, gates, fences, walls or other means of boundary enclosure shall be erected on the site without the National Park Authority's prior written consent.

End of schedule