



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 September 2025

by N Teasdale BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20th October 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/U2750/W/25/3368747

Coatham House, Forest Moor Road, Knaresborough, North Yorkshire, HG5 8JY

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant approval required under Article 3(1) and Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (GPDO).
 - The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs Dowker against the decision of North Yorkshire Council.
 - The application Ref is ZC24/03858/PBR.
 - The development proposed is conversion of single storey building on agricultural land to the rear of Coatham House.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Background and Main Issues

2. Under Article 3 (1) and Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q of the GPDO, planning permission is granted for Q (a) a change of use of (ii) a former agricultural building that was (but is no longer) part of an established agricultural unit and any land within that building's curtilage to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 to the Use Classes Order subject to limitations and conditions.
3. Paragraph Q2 (1) states that where the development proposed is development under Class Q(a) together with development under Class Q(c) relating to building operations reasonably necessary to convert the building, development is permitted subject to the condition that before beginning the development, the developer must apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to amongst others, (f) the design or external appearance of the building.
4. The Council's reasoning for refusal states that the site is not part of an established agricultural unit, nor was it part of an established agricultural unit on 24th July 2023. Therefore, it does not comply with paragraph (a) or (b) of Class Q. It also sets out that the proposed building operations include the required repair of the existing structural frame which goes beyond the permitted building operations in paragraph (j). It is further explained that the extent of the proposed installation of windows is considered to go beyond that which is reasonably necessary for the building to function as a dwellinghouse as per paragraph (j). The decision notice also sets out that the number of full length, glazed fenestration that dominate the elevations are not considered to be appropriate in design or external appearance of a converted agricultural building as considered under paragraph Q2(1)(f).
5. The main issues are therefore:

- Whether the site complies with paragraph Q1 (a) or (b) relating to the established agricultural unit;
- Whether the proposed building operations go beyond that which is reasonably necessary for the building to function as a dwellinghouse; and
- The effect of the proposed development on the design or external appearance of the building.

Reasons

Agricultural unit

6. The appeal site comprises an existing single storey building constructed with a timber frame covered in corrugated metal roof sheets and wall cladding. It is located north of the associated dwelling known as Coatham House, off Forest Moor Road, Knaresborough.
7. The proposed development seeks prior approval for the conversion of the barn to form one dwelling.
8. As set out above, in order to benefit from permitted development rights, the appeal site is subject to certain limitations and conditions. Paragraph Q1 explains that development is not permitted by Class Q if (a) in the case of a site that is part of an established agricultural unit, the site was not part of the established agricultural unit (i) on 24th July 2023, or (ii) where the site became part of the established agricultural unit after 24th July 2023, for a period of at least 10 years before the date development under Class Q begins, (b) in the case of a site that was (but is no longer) part of an established agricultural unit— (i) the site was part of an established agricultural unit on 24th July 2023, (ii) where the site ceased to be part of an established agricultural unit after 24th July 2023, the site has not been part of the established agricultural unit for a period of at least 10 years before the date development under Class Q begins, or (iii) since ceasing to be part of an established agricultural unit, the site has been used for any non-agricultural purpose.
9. The appeal site is not part of an established agricultural unit and so does not comply with paragraph (a). However, paragraph (b) relates to a site that was (but is no longer) part of an established agricultural unit which is the relevant paragraph applicable to this appeal. Criteria (i) does not apply as the use stopped pre 24th July 2023. Criteria (ii) does not apply as the use ceased pre 24th July 2023. Criteria (iii) does not apply as the site has not been used for any non-agricultural purpose since ceasing to be part of the established agricultural unit. Consequently, the proposed development does not conflict with any of the sub sections to preclude its eligibility for Class Q.
10. The proposed development would therefore comply with paragraph Q1 (b) of the GPDO.

Building operations

11. Paragraph Q1 (j) explains that development is not permitted by Class Q if, the development under Class Q (c) would consist of building operations other than— (i) the installation or replacement of— (aa) windows, doors, roofs, or exterior walls, or (bb) water, drainage, electricity, gas or other services, to the extent reasonably

necessary for the building to function as a dwellinghouse, and (ii) partial demolition to the extent reasonably necessary to carry out building operations allowed by paragraph Q.1(j)(i).

12. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides further clarification about the scope of the permitted development operations¹. It explains that it is not the intention of the permitted development right to allow rebuilding work which would go beyond what is reasonably necessary for the conversion of the building to residential use. Therefore, it is only where the existing building is already suitable for conversion to residential use that the building would be considered to have the permitted development right. What represents a conversion is not defined and thus is a matter of planning judgement.
13. The Council considered the proposal to be non-compliant with paragraph Q1 (j) as the building operations would require repair of the existing structural frame such as replacement and battening out of the unsupported timber purlins, as per the structural report that states that in a couple of locations the purlins have been spliced, and the free end is unsupported.
14. The structural report explains that to convert the building to a dwelling, it would be necessary to remove the corrugated metal cladding, provide a new sheathing board with a breathable membrane and a new cladding system with windows and additional doors. It confirms that the structural timber frame would be retained and battened out to accommodate thermal insulation. The roof would be treated similarly. The fall in the floor would need to be altered by adding levelling timbers to form steps and replacing the floorboards. A blinding concrete to the sub-floor space would also be recommended along with treatment of the perimeter to ensure the building is sealed at low level with ventilation also being maintained.
15. At my site visit, I observed the condition of the building and noted that the timber frame was in many places in poor condition and has needed to be strengthened quite a lot. I am not therefore convinced that the structural frame can be retained without significant repairs/rebuilding works. The extent of the proposed glazing (full length, large fenestration dominating the elevations) is not considered reasonably necessary for the building to function as a dwellinghouse. I appreciate that the existing building has no windows and only a door at the gable ends and that there is no guidance on what is considered a necessary number of windows. However, I still find that the extent of the glazing is over and above what is reasonably necessary for the building to function as a dwellinghouse. This could be attained through smaller areas of glazing.
16. Whilst the works set out in paragraph Q1 (j) can be extensive, the extent of fabric that is to be retained and used, along with the number of elements that are required in order to facilitate the conversion, needs to be assessed as a whole rather than in isolation. With this in mind, the totality of the works would be so extensive that they would be beyond a conversion and beyond the permitted building operations under paragraph Q1 (j).

Design

17. The fenestration would be made up of multiple full length glazed openings and roof lights. This would not be reflective of the existing agricultural building or character

¹ Paragraph 105 PPG.

of the surrounding area. It would lead to considerable light spillage onto the open countryside. As set out above, the building could function as a dwellinghouse with smaller areas of glazing which would also allow for appropriate levels of natural light. I note that the glazing has been proposed to mirror the two existing openings. Even so, I am not convinced that following the design of two doors to the extent shown is an acceptable design solution for this site.

18. For the above reasons, the proposed development would not be acceptable in terms of design and external appearance.

Other matters

19. The Officer's report explains that the plans as submitted are not compliant with the National Described Space Standards as there is no built-in storage of at least 2 square metres provided. Bedroom 2, shown as a double, also does not have a floor area of at least 11.5 square metres. Given that this did not specifically form part of the reasoning for refusal and that the scheme fails to meet the requirements and limitations of Class Q of the GPDO, then I do not find it necessary to consider this matter further.

Conclusion

20. The proposed development would not accord with the requirements and limitations of Class Q of the GPDO and thus the appeal should be dismissed.

N Teasdale

INSPECTOR