Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

Committee: Planning

Date: 15 April 2025

Applicant: TM Harrison

Parish: Threshfield

Officer: Joanne Wood

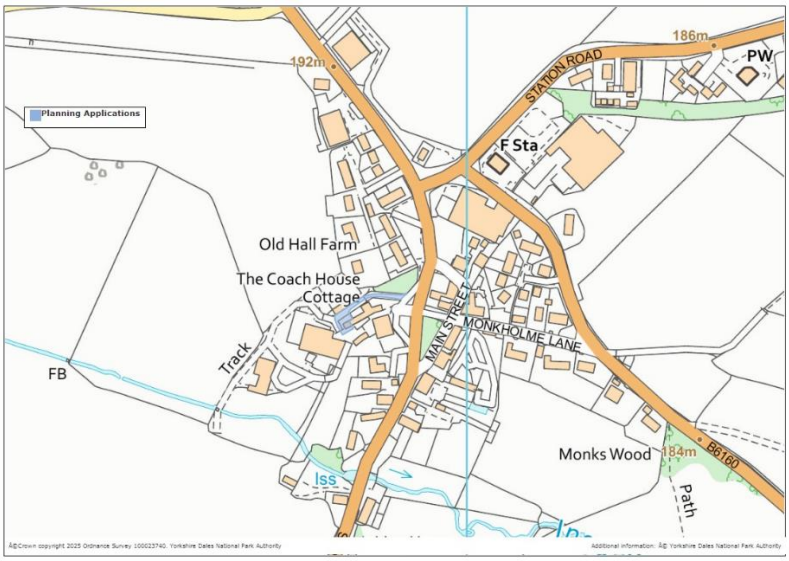
Application No: C/71/215B

Site Address: Old Hall Farm, Threshfield, Skipton, BD23 5PL

Proposal: Full planning permission for conversion and extension of an existing traditional farm building to form 1no, one-bedroom holiday let/local occupancy dwelling and creation of parking and turning area

Purpose of Report

1. That Members REFUSE planning permission for the above development in accordance with the recommendations below.



Reason For Committee Consideration

2. This application is reported to Committee for the following reason: the Parish Council recommendation is contrary to the decision which the Head of Development Management proposes to take.

Application Site

3. The application relates to Old Hall barn which is a working farmstead located to the south west of the village of Threshfield. Vehicular access to the site is taken from a layby off the B6265 main road that also serves the Old Hall Public House.

4. The building to which the application relates is located to the east of the complex of modern farm buildings at Old Hall Farm, adjacent to existing residential properties, and to the rear (west) of the Old Hall Public House. The building has an open frontage and faces south-east towards a small yard. It continues to the north-east, beyond the proposed development area, as an open garage serving the adjacent dwelling. The north- west side of the building faces onto an area of hardstanding and an access track leading from the main road through Threshfield into the farmyard.

Proposal

5. Planning permission is sought for the conversion and extension of an existing traditional farm building to form 1no, one-bedroom holiday let/local occupancy dwelling and creation of parking and turning area.

6. The application would involve the infilling of the front elevation of the building with glazed units, the re-roofing of the building, and the construction of an extension to the rear of the building. A garden area is proposed to the front and side of the dwelling which would be enclosed by a 1.1 metre high drystone wall, and a parking area for 2no. vehicles is proposed to the rear of the building.

7. The residential unit is proposed to be used as a holiday let, with the potential to also be used as a dwelling for local occupancy as an alternative. The applicant has confirmed their agreement to enter into a s106 agreement to secure this.

Relevant Planning History

8. The following applications are relevant:

   C/71/215C - Full planning permission for the proposed demolition of 1 no. existing corrugated tin sheet building and the change of use of the land for the siting of 1 no. camping pod. Approved – Conditional 27/02/2025

Consultations

9. The comments of statutory and non-statutory consultees are summarised below:

Head of Visitor Services – No response received

Area Ranger (Wharfedale & Littondale) - Proposed development does not affect the PROW

Trees & Woodlands – No objection. However, it is recommended to plant two trees rather than the proposed four. Four trees in this small area will mature to put pressure on the garden space and building in the future, making them more likely to have inappropriate pruning works carried out on them, or removing them entirely.

Wildlife Conservation Officer – No objection subject to the imposition of a condition in relation to nesting birds.

Fire Officer - Craven – No objection

Chief Environmental Health Officer CEHO - The historical use of the agricultural building could have led to some potential contaminated land issues, namely fuel or agricultural chemical storage. The proposal is to introduce a sensitive receptor to the site and this must be taken into account. However any potential contamination is likely to be isolated, in order to ensure any potential risk is suitably addressed it is recommeded that a condition is attached to any grant of permsision requring the reporting of any unexpected contamamination encountered during development

The proposed dwelling must be fitted with suitable water treatment which must include a pre-filter and fail safe UV steriliser. To ensure whole house treatment, the unit should be sited at point of entry into the property.

Conditions are also recommended in relation to noise and hours of delivery and construction, and dust.

Chief Technical Officer CTO - Craven – All work is to be carried out, to ensure compliance with the Building Regulations 2023.

Highways - The access onto the B6265 is acceptable. Turning & parking has been identified with 2 spaces provided, consequently there are no Highways objections.

Threshfield Parish Council - The Parish Council supports fully the application for the following reasons:

- It has no detrimental impact on the landscape character of the area
- It does not have any detrimental impact on the residential amenities of existing residents of the village

- The site has existing access which will safely serve the proposed small scale tourism activity
- It provides sustainable rural tourism
- The Parish Council welcomes this development to add tourist accommodation and so support services in the village and wider area - such as pubs, cafes, shops and tourist destinations.

Public Responses

Public responses received at the time of writing: 7

10. A site notice was displayed on 13th January 2025. 7 public responses have been received providing support for the application proposals for the following reasons:
    - Proposal would utilise an existing redundant building.
    - Limited impact upon the landscape have limited or no impact on wider landscape views.
    - Proposal would not impact upon highway safety.
    - Local occupancy dwelling or holiday use will allow for diversification of an existing farm business and also give it the flexibility of use to react to changing circumstances.

Assessment

Key Issues:

- Planning Policy
- Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Building and the Surrounding Area
- Impact on Residential Amenity
- Impact on Highway Safety
- Biodiversity Enhancement
- Parish Council comments
- Equality Act

Planning Policy

11. Policy L1 considers development affecting heritage assets. Traditional buildings may be designated as Listed Buildings or are considered to be 'heritage assets' despite not being designated. Proposals affecting undesignated heritage assets that are demonstrably of equivalent significance to designated heritage assets will be treated as though they were designated for the purposes of the policy.

12. Policy L2 allows traditional buildings to be changed to residential and employment uses in certain locations (in existing settlements, building groups, or suitable roadside locations). Intensive uses will not be appropriate in buildings that are isolated in the landscape and a change of use is only allowed in isolated buildings

where there would be no material alteration to the exterior of the building or its surroundings.

13. Policy L3 considers the details of the conversion works. Proposals will not be allowed where they undermine the architectural and historic character of the traditional building and its landscape setting. The building must have the physical capacity to accommodate the new use without significant extension or alteration or requiring new ancillary buildings. Alterations to the building and the creation of any new curtilage and highway access should be the minimum necessary and should be sensitive to the traditional character and appearance of buildings and not adversely affect the immediate or wider landscape setting of the building or any parts of the building with recognised significance.

14. A proposal to convert a traditional building to a new use must satisfy the requirements of all three policies.

15. The Heritage Statement which has been submitted as part of the application identifies the building as dating from the early 19th century and forming part of a longer range of historic structures, and therefore constituting an important component of the farmstead group. The traditional building is of local heritage significance for its architectural and historic interest, as a simple but functional livestock building, and is therefore considered to be a traditional building for the purposes of policies L1 and L2. The building is not of equivalent significance to a listed building but is nevertheless considered to be an undesignated heritage asset of historic significance; its significance partly as a result of its contribution to farmstead group.

16. Policy BE2 refers to farm diversification applications such as this and supports the diversification of land-based enterprises if it assists the viability and supports the beneficial aspects of land management and meets Policy SP4. This application is to support the existing farm business and has been sited and designed to enable the uses to coexist alongside each other.

17. The proposal has been submitted for the conversion of the barn to form a single residential unit. The building sits within the village of Threshfield and as such would meet the locational requirements of Policy L2, subject to a restriction on the occupancy of the dwelling to meet the local occupancy criteria set out in Appendix 5 of the Local Plan (2015-2030). The proposal has therefore been considered under Policy L3 of the Local Plan below.

Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Building and the Surrounding area

18. Policy L3 of the Local Plan (2015-2030) considers the conversion of traditional buildings to new uses and states that they will be permitted where they confirm to the guidance set out in the Design Guide and it can be demonstrated that the

proposal would meet all 6 criteria listed under policy L3. Criterion a) requires that the building has the physical capacity to accommodate the new use without significant extension or alteration …….' Criterion b) states that alterations to the building.....are the minimum necessary and are sensitive to the traditional character and appearance of the building.' The supporting text for this policy provides further justification in this respect and states that if a building is not big enough to accommodate a proposed re-use without the need for large extensions and other intrusive alterations, it is not suitable for that re-use in the first place.

19. The proposal includes the construction of an extension to the north elevation of the host building. As the host building is limited in terms of its size, the proposed extension would represent almost a 50% increase in the size over and above that of the original building. This would therefore constitute a significant extension in the context of the host building and would subsequently affect the heritage value of this traditional building. It also significantly increases the footprint of the building and so detracts from the simple subservient nature of the building.

20. The building has outer walls of local random rubble, with quoins of squared sandstone, however the original stone slate roof covering has been replaced by a modern one of profiled sheets. The Heritage Statement states that the building appears originally to have comprised three loose boxes for livestock, each with their own entrance, but the front wall was removed during the 20th century, leading to its present appearance, in which brick was used to extend the two internal cross-walls forward slightly. The Heritage Statement goes on to state that the gable and rear elevation remain essentially unaltered. Therefore, the proposed extension would completely obscure the original rear elevation of the building and its features of historic interest which, as the Heritage Statement confirms, is one of the limited parts of the building which remains unaltered. The proposal would therefore cause harm to the character of the building, thereby diminishing its important contribution to the special historic and architectural interest of the farmstead group as a whole.

21. An alternative solution to extend the existing building to provide additional accommodation has been suggested and discussed with the applicant, which would involve extending the building into the covered area immediately to the north east and infilling the front and rear elevations. However, the applicant has advised they would not be willing to extend into this area as it functions as a storage and parking area for the adjoining property, Old Hall Stable.

22. It is therefore considered that the external alterations proposed to the buildings would fail to conserve the historic character and heritage significance of the building and as such would conflict with the aims of Policies L2 and L3 which seek to conserve the interest of such buildings and permit conversions to dwellings only where they sensitive to their traditional character and appearance.

23. The application also includes the area to the east and south of the building which is proposed to form private amenity space, as well as the hardstanding area to the rear

of the building which would provide parking for 2no. vehicles. This area of land relates well to the barn and would be a proportionate for parking and garden. However, the change of use of this area, in particular the garden area to the south and east which would be enclosed by a drystone wall to form residential curtilage, would further alter the character and appearance of the building and the surrounding farmstead, changing the setting of the barn considerably. This would cause further harm to the historic character of the building, and the wider group of buildings of which it forms an integral part.

Impact on Residential Amenity

24. The building is screened from outside the application site by surrounding buildings and is located a significant distance from any surrounding properties which are outside of the applicant's ownership. The building is located approximately 25 metres from the rear of Old Hall Inn and its associated guest accommodation to the east of the site, however due to the oblique angle at which Old Hall Inn is viewed from the front elevation of the host building, the proposal would not result in any opportunities for overlooking. In addition, the extension to the building would not result in it being any closer to any surrounding properties, and as such there would be no impact any surrounding properties in terms of loss of light or outlook.

25. The proposal for a small 1no. one-bedroomed residential unit, accommodating in total no more than two people at any one time, would only form a slight increase in the use of the site. The relationship between the converted building and the farm buildings still in use is acceptable as the converted building will remain in the ownership of the Applicants who will ensure that noise and nuisance from the farm will not affect the occupants.

26. A management plan has been proposed, and given the location of the site in relation to surrounding properties, it is considered that the conversion of the building to residential use will have little or no impact on residential amenity and is consistent with Local Plan Policy SP4.

Highway Safety

27. The application proposes a parking area to the rear of the building which could accommodate 2no. vehicles. Following consultation, the Highway Authority has raised no objection to the proposals, which are therefore considered acceptable in terms of parking provision and impact on highway safety in the area, in accordance with Policy SP4 of the Local Plan.

Biodiversity Enhancement

28. The proposal is exempt from the requirement to submit a Biodiversity Net Gain Metric as the development site is concrete and hard-core with less than 25sqm of existing habitat.

29. Local Plan Policy W2 sets out that new development that would have an impact on biodiversity will be required to make a proportionate on-site contribution to wildlife enhancement in accordance with Table 7 and the Yorkshire Dales Supplementary Design Guide.

30. Biodiversity enhancement will be provided throughout the site in accordance with policy W2. Specifically, the application proposes 4no. trees to be planted within the front garden, as well as 1 no. bat box to be installed on the west elevation and 1no. bird box to be installed on the south elevation of the proposed extension to the existing building. Following consultation, the Wildlife Conservation Officer has raised no objection to the proposals. The proposal would therefore result in biodiversity enhancement at the application site and would therefore accord with Local Plan Policy W2.

Parish Council Comments

31. Threshfield Parish Council supports the application for the following reasons:

- It has no detrimental impact on the landscape character of the area
- It does not have any detrimental impact on the residential amenities of existing residents of the village
- The site has existing access which will safely serve the proposed small scale tourism activity
- It provides sustainable rural tourism
- The Parish Council welcomes this development to add tourist accommodation and so support services in the village and wider area - such as pubs, cafes, shops and tourist destinations.

32. Whilst the benefits that the scheme would provide in respect of provision of additional tourist accommodation, should the building be used for this purpose, are acknowledged, this would not outweigh the harm caused to the character and historic significance of the building and subsequent conflict with Policies SP4, L1, L2 and L3 of the Local Plan.

Equality Act

33. The Authority has a duty under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010 to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant characteristic and persons who do not share it. The relevant characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation.

34. It is considered that there are no overt reasons why this proposal would affect anyone with the protected characteristics such that the application should be permitted or refused on equality grounds.

Conclusion

35. It is considered that the conversion of the building to form a dwelling would meet the locational requirements of Policy L2 as a traditional building within a settlement, subject to the applicants entering into a legal agreement to ensure the occupancy is restricted to local occupancy as set out in Appendix 5 of the Local Plan. However, it is considered that the conversion works and the proposed extension would individually and cumulatively have a significantly adverse impact on the character and significance of the traditional building. It is considered that the alterations are not necessary to bring the building back into a viable new use and there are no clear public benefits associated with the particularly harmful interventions. The proposed development would therefore fail to meet the requirements of Policies SP1, SP2, SP4, L1, L2 and L3 of the Local Plan (2015-2030) and guidance contained within the adopted Yorkshire Dales National Park Design Guide (2017), paragraph 176, Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) and s72 of the Town and Country Listed Building & Conservation Areas Act 1990.

Recommendation

36. It is recommended that permission be REFUSED based on the following:

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, the proposed conversion works and extension and the proposed change of use of land to domestic use, individually and cumulatively, would detract from the character and significance of the two traditional buildings. The works proposed are not the minimum necessary and are not sensitive to the traditional character and appearance of the buildings. The works would also adversely affect the wider landscape setting of the buildings. The proposal is therefore contrary to policies SP1, SP2, SP4, L1, L2 and L3 of the Yorkshire Dales Local Plan (2015-2030), guidance contained within the adopted Yorkshire Dales National Park Design Guide (2017) and paragraph 176 and Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).