Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

Committee: Planning

Date: 2 September 2025

Applicant: Mr C Hallam

Parish: Thorpe

Officer: Brian Diamond

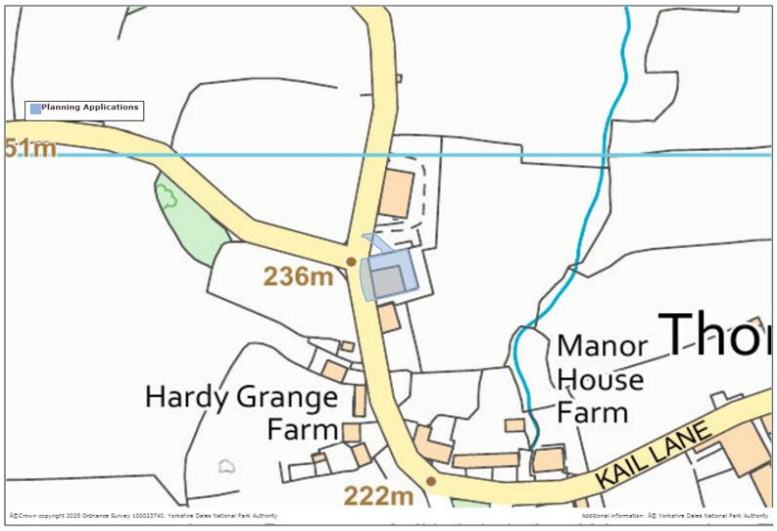
Application No: C/70/27A

Site Address: Barn to north of Blackburn House, Thorpe, Skipton (GR:401269,461934)

Proposal: The conversion of an existing stone-built traditional barn to form 1 local occupancy restricted residential dwelling or holiday let accommodation.

Purpose of Report

1. That Members APPROVE 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 site comprises a traditional barn with modern cattle shed extension, an existing farm yard and the entrance to the grounds from Kail Lane. The grounds are associated with Blackburn House, immediately adjacent to the south. The site is located in the north end of the village of Thorpe.

Proposal

4. The conversion of an existing stone-built traditional barn to form 1 local occupancy restricted residential dwelling or holiday let accommodation. Works to include the rebuilding of the north gable wall, demolition of the existing wooden extension on the east elevation and the erection of a single-storey stone-built extension on the north elevation.

Relevant Planning History

5. The following applications are relevant:

   C/70/27 full planning permission for conversion of barn to form one local occupancy dwelling or holiday let Approved - Section 106 08/02/2017

Consultations

6. The comments of statutory and non-statutory consultees are summarized below:

Highways – None received.

Wildlife Conservation Officer No objection subject to condition and/or informative notes. If works are due to commence during main bird nesting season (March to August inclusive) then no more than two days prior to commencement of works there must first be a check of the building for nesting birds by a suitably qualified ecologist. Should nesting birds be discovered then works must not progress until after dependant young have fledged. Recommend that informative notes on bats be added to any planning certificate and / or decision notice that is issued if permission is granted.

Fire Officer - At this stage in the planning approval process the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority in its capacity as Fire and Rescue Authority ('YNYCA') have no objection/observation to the proposed development.

Chief Environmental Health Officer CEHO - The proposed dwelling will be served by the existing private water supply. The addition of the dwelling to the supply will not alter the current classification of sampling frequency. The property must be fitted with a pre-filter and fail safe UV steriliser along with any other treatment deemed

necessary and should be located at point of entry into the property treating all water being supplied.

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.

Conditions are recommended relating to remediation of contamination, construction hours and provision of water supply.

Thorpe Parish Council – “Over the last 30 years Thorpe has reversed the trend of many Dales Villages in that it is a thriving community of permanent residents.We now have many young families with children attending local schools. We have 23 houses of which 2 are already holiday lets.

A number of recent barn conversions within the village have been granted the right to become holiday lets, but are presently occupied long term. Holiday lets often experience long vacant periods, especially in the winter months which would be detrimental to the nature of our village and the locality.”

Following correspondence with the Planning Officer, Thorpe Parish Council submitted revised comments:

“Twenty-Five residents attended a Parish Meeting on Monday 25/11/2024 at Stable Barn, Thorpe to discuss the above application. Prior to the meeting all attendees had examined the details of the application on line.

1.Holiday Let Status.
The meeting recommends the permission should be restricted to Permanent Local Occupancy.
Reasons.From a total of 23 habitable houses within the village there are at least 8 Properties with permission to be used as holiday let’s.
This meeting wishes to maintain our high permanent occupancy status and the unique nature of our community .

2.An Existing ancient drystone wall has been demolished without prior permission. The meeting requests that its reinstatement is included in the documents.

3.The excessive size of the development and its negative impact on the character of the local environment .
Reasons
The Barn is in a prominent position adjacent to the main road at the entrance to the village.The North East Elevation can be clearly seen from Kail lane (Burnsall direction)and the B1610.It can also be seen from the public footpath from Burnsall where it meets Kail Lane. The design and size of the 2 proposed extensions are detrimental to the heritage status of the barn and the adjoining listed Blackburn House.

Of the 10 recent redundant farm building conversions in Thorpe no extension to the original stone buildings has been granted. The meeting does not consider it necessary or appropriate to build a covered area with toilet block. The proposal to include 10 roof lights is excessive and not in keeping with the heritage status of the barn.

4. Parking Provision.
The proposed development has 4 bedrooms and so potentially could be let to four couples arriving in separate cars.We request provision should be made to park 4 vehicles with turning space to avoid reversing onto the main village road.

5. Water Supply.
The meeting was attended by [redacted] a resident and representative of Thorpe Water, a privately owned sole provider of water to 3 Farms and all the domestic properties in the village. He informed us that during the dry summer periods the volume of water to the village is severely limited and he could not sanction the installation of a hot tub on this property. The applicant has installed a hot tub and exterior shower at Blackburn House. It is recommended that a bore hole should be installed on site to ensure continuity of supply.

6.Trees
The retention of Trees on site does not appear to be included in the documents and the meeting requests that all the trees be retained to ensure adequate screening.

7. Traffic.
The meeting expressed concern on the increase in Traffic. The narrow lanes into Thorpe with limited passing places are not made for large volumes of Traffic. With the potential for twice weekly changeovers of visitors not used to the narrow roads the local residents have been inconvenienced by visitors who are reluctant/unable to reverse etc."

Public Responses

A site notice was displayed on 2nd December 2024.

7. A total of 16 neighbour objections have been received, and the points raised from all responses are summarised below:
    - the road isn't made to have loads of cars
    - noise pollution from having holiday lets can affect children and animals
    - the village has a heritage of families living in it, holiday lets conflict with this
    - Thorpe's lanes and water system are now on the limit of what they can cope with
    - this barn will extend an already unwanted holiday let complex
    - support the repurposing of this redundant farm building but cannot support the erection of additional structures
    - the applicants have demolished an ancient boundary wall to this listed property
    - the existing wall is the main access to the village of Thorpe and has been undisturbed for many years, it needs to be preserved

- the dovecotes are mentioned in the bat survey, these are of particular character and should be preserved
- the existing building is protected by an established copse which should be preserved
- considerable number of bats in the area – permanent bat boxes to the site would help support these communities
- the addition of some bird boxes should have been included in the application
- external lighting should meet the requirements of the standard lighting condition from the National Park Authority
- the existing barn doors should be preserved including the lintel
- a maximum number of 2 spaces should be set
- two adjacent holiday lets owned by the same people could allow for large groups to attend and disrupt the tranquillity of Thorpe
- currently 40% of the existing housing stock in Thorpe has permission to become a holiday let
- no property has been given permission to add an external ablution block to facilitate camping or glamping
- as of 21st Nov 2024, no planning notice has been posted outside the location
- would be more sustainable if solar panels were added to the East roof
- suspect this is the next part of a much bigger plan to develop the site into more of a holiday complex with camping
- extensions are not in keeping with the vernacular architecture of the original and impact the view on the approach to the village
- 8 skylights proposed give the building an industrial appearance
- blocking of the original door opening on the west elevation and its replacement by a window at first floor level is regretted
- no other conversions have been allowed to extend out of the footprint of the original building
- light pollution
- preservation of the wooden parts of the structure and new wooden exterior
- considerably less residential properties when original permission granted in 2017 and as such the supply of water was considered possible - any new applicants must therefore apply to Thorpe Water Company for permission to connect to the supply – if permission is not granted then it is recommended that it is served by an alternative supply, ie. a private bore hole

Assessment

Key Issues:

- Principle of development
- Holiday Let Use
- Design
- Parking Provision
- Water Supply
- Nature Recovery

- Parish Council comments
- Equality Act

Planning Policy

8. The proposal is to convert a traditional building to a residential dwelling/holiday let use. The site has an extant permission for the conversion of the building to form one local occupancy dwelling or holiday let, for which works have commenced and as such the permission is extant and be further implemented.

9. The Yorkshire Dales Local Plan 2015-2030 is the adopted development plan for the area. Policy SP2 establishes that development will only be permitted where it furthers the statutory National Park purposes: the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage and the promotion of opportunities for the enjoyment and understanding of the special qualities of the National Park.

10. Policy SP4 Development Quality requires that the design of proposals is informed by and responds positively to the site, its surrounding context and its landscape setting. The scale, height, form, massing, materials, proportions and appearance of any buildings or structures must be complimentary to the context of the site.

11. Policy L1 Heritage Assets sets out that development proposals affecting undesignated heritage assets that are demonstrably of equivalent significance to designated heritage assets will be determined in accordance with the policy for designated assets. The barn, the subject of this application, is a traditional Dales barn of late 17th century construction and is closely associated with Blackburn House, a Grade II Listed Building. However it is not considered to be of demonstrably equivalent significance to a designated heritage asset.

12. Policy L1 also requires that proposals affecting a designated heritage asset will be permitted provided they conserve or enhance its significance. Proposals that result in substantial harm to or loss of a Grade II Listed Building will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.

13. Policy L2 Conversion of traditional buildings allows proposals for the change of use of traditional buildings to high intensity residential or visitor accommodation within existing settlements and building groups, or other suitable roadside locations. Blackburn Barn is located in a roadside location, within a settlement and group of buildings and meets the locational requirements of the policy.

14. Policy L3 Conversion of traditional buildings makes clear that for a proposed conversion of a traditional building to a high intensity use to be permitted, the building must have physical capacity to accommodate the new use without significant extension or alteration. Any alterations to the building must be the minimum necessary, be sensitive to the traditional character and appearance of buildings and not adversely affect the immediate or wider landscape setting of the building. The new use should not displace an existing one, materials must be consistent with local building traditions, the building must be capable of conversion requiring no more than minor structural work, and the extent of any

structural work must not compromise the historic interest and character of the building.

15. The Authority is in the process of producing a new Local Plan (2025-2040) for the whole National Park. The publication stage of the Local Plan is now complete and it is anticipated that it will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination prior to the Committee meeting. Once the Plan has been submitted weight will be given to certain aspects of the Local Plan (such as those policies which have no substantive objections) in decisions on planning applications.

16. The most relevant policies in the new Local Plan are:

    AB2 - Conversion of Traditional Buildings. This policy effectively replaces adopted Policy L2 and differs materially from it by establishing that self-contained holiday let accommodation will only be permitted where it would: appropriately conserve a Listed Building, support farm or rural estate business diversification scheme, be capable of effective supervision and management and that the use is restricted to 28 days short stay letting by individual households. The policy also explains that the building must be a heritage asset worth conserving and have not already been extensively modified.

    The full text of this policy is available on the Authority's website.

17. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) paragraph 135 outlines that planning decisions should ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area for the short and long term, are visually attractive and are sympathetic to local character and history. Paragraph 189 states that great weight should be attributed to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks. Paragraph 214 outlines that Local Planning Authorities should refuse consent where a proposed development would lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss.

Holiday Let Use

18. The proposed development seeks to convert the barn north of Blackburn House to either a local occupancy restricted residential dwelling or holiday let accommodation. A number of objections have been received from residents and from Thorpe Parish Council voicing opposition to the proposed holiday let use based on concerns over an incremental build up of holiday let accommodation in Thorpe. The Yorkshire Dales Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2024 update acknowledges that around 21.6% of dwellings across the whole Park are not permanently occupied and are either second homes, holiday lets and vacant properties.

19. It is considered that the emerging Local Plan 2025-2030 is now at an advanced stage and that weight can be afforded to it. The weight to be afforded to individual policies should vary according to whether the policy has attracted significant objections to it and in relation to a number of other policy considerations. In

applying policy to development proposals the weight to be afforded to individual policies in the new plan is also likely to vary in judging the balance of material considerations raised by the proposal.

20. In this case the proposal complies with policy L2 of the adopted Local Plan 2015-2030 which allows for a holiday let use but conflicts with the change in policy direction reflected in policy AB2 of the emerging Local Plan 2025-2040. However there is an extant permission (granted in 2017 with works commenced) to convert the barn to a local occupancy dwelling or holiday let. The current application seeks to gain permission for the same use but of different design and detail.

21. The 2017 permission represents a ‘fallback’ position such that, if this application were to be refused, the barn could still be converted to a holiday let use. This fallback position is a material consideration to which significant weight should be afforded, and outweighs the limited weight that could be afforded to the emerging policy. Members are therefore advised that officers consider that to rely on the emerging policy in this case would not be sustainable.

Design

22. Following advice from Officers the plans, as originally submitted, have been amended to address design issues. Thes amendments include the retention of the dovecote on the south elevation, the reduction in the number of proposed rooflights, the removal of the proposed extension on the east elevation, the filling in of the proposed extension on the north elevation and the retention of the slit openings on the east elevation.

23. It is noted that the proposed conversion would remove the existing large wooden modern extension located on the east elevation. The removal of this extension would highlight features located on the east elevation, such as the barn door and slit openings, and would overall enhance the heritage significance of the building.

24. Nonetheless, it is acknowledged that the proposed extension on the north elevation would conflict with the aims of Policy L3 by introducing a significant extension to a traditional building. Policy L3 outlines that alterations must be sensitive to the traditional character and appearance of the building. The extension would infill existing unused yard space to the north of the barn. The yard area is formed by retaining walls on two sides built from concrete blocks.

25. The proposed extension would necessitate the relocation of an existing window located on the north elevation. However, the applicant has submitted a Structural Report which outlines that cracking is present on the north gable wall. The extent of the cracking is significant and means that remedial works to make good the wall would not be suitable. The wall requires careful removal and rebuilding. As a result, the heritage significance of the existing window is not feasibly conservable. The window features a stone lintel which could be re-used.

26. The amendments also include a parapet wall, to run along the top and side of the extension, screening it from views from Kail Lane. Additionally, the applicant has stated that a brown or green roof would be implemented to the extension and has

removed a proposed skylight. Taken in combination, these amendments would ensure that the extension would not be readily visible.

27. The proposed materials to be used in the extension are considered sympathetic to the existing building. The walling stone is to match the existing. A significant degree of glazing is proposed for the east elevation of the extension. Whilst it is acknowledged that this would have an impact on the solid-to-void ratio, this would be well balanced by the high degree of solid stone walling on the main building.

28. The proposed extension is considered to be an effective use of the yard area which would enhance the amenity value of the converted building and have a negligible impact on the character and setting of the building.

29. On other elevations on the main building, it is proposed to use existing openings and reinstate a disused opening on the west elevation. The proposed rooflights on the east-facing roof-slope are considered to be the minimum necessary to achieve natural light access for the proposed bedrooms.

30. A number of neighbour objections have raised the removal of a drystone wall as a concern, and the applicant acknowledges that a drystone wall was removed early in the application process, however following a site visit it can be confirmed that the applicant has begun reconstructing the wall.

31. A number of responses have also raised the issue of potentially removing trees from the site. The applicant has stated that they do not wish to remove any trees from the site. Grant of planning permission could include a condition requiring the retention of trees at the site.

Impact on Listed Building

32. Blackburn House was listed in September 1954, and the barn is not mentioned in the official listing. Therefore, it is considered that alterations to the barn will only have an impact on the listed building where they directly affect the setting and character of the building.

33. Blackburn House is located to the south of the site, and the south elevation of the barn is to receive no significant alterations. The main alterations proposed are located on the east and north elevations. The north elevation extension would not be visible from Blackburn house, and so it is considered that any impact it would have on the Listed Building is likely to be negligible.

34. The removal of the existing wooden extension on the east elevation is considered to have a positive impact on the setting and character of Blackburn House. The structure is visible from Blackburn House and detracts from the traditional character of the building.

Parking Provision and Traffic

35. The applicant has shown that three parking spaces can be provided on-site. North Yorkshire Parking standards for development require two parking spaces for a dwelling with three bedrooms. The submitted plans show that the proposal is capable of providing the required level of on-site parking.

36. It is noted that there are a number of concerns around traffic to and from the site. However, as previously noted, there is an extant permission allowing the site to be developed into a holiday let or dwellinghouse. It is considered that the increase in traffic levels as a result of the proposed conversion would be comparable to that of the extant permission and therefore not a significant change from what is already permitted.

Water Supply

37. A representative from Thorpe Water has commented on the application and stated that an applicant would be expected to apply to Thorpe Water Company for permission to connect to the supply. If permission to connect to Thorpe Water is not granted then it would be expected that an alternative measure would be sought, such as a borehole.

38. The applicant has stated that they currently have water supply to the property and the proposed use would reduce water usage compared to current levels. Clearly water supply is essential for human habitation however for the purposes of this application the Planning Authority just needs to be satisfied that it is possible to supply the building. The details of how the supply is provided would be matters for other regulatory regimes.

Nature Recovery

39. There are no wildlife enhancement measures proposed. However it is considered that the proposal is in a state where the inclusion of planting, bat boxes and bird boxes, secured via planning condition, would be sufficient to ensure an adequate uplift in the biodiversity value of the site from its current state to satisfy Local Plan Policy W2.

Parish Council Comments

40. Thorpe Parish Council has raised objections for the following reasons: the holiday let status, the drystone wall, the excessive size of the development, the parking provision, the water supply and the trees on site. Each of these points have been addressed in the sections above.

Equality Act

41. 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.

42. 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

43. The proposed development would result in a scheme which materially alters the exterior of the existing barn. However, it is considered that these alterations are moderate and in-keeping with the character of the site. Moreover, suitable mitigation measures are proposed to ensure that any visual impact from the proposed alterations would be well-screened.

44. The site has an extant permission for holiday let use or local occupancy dwelling use. Therefore the principle of these uses on the site is established and the extant permission is a viable fallback position. Although it is considered that some limited weight can be afforded to the emerging planning policy, the extant permission and compliance with the adopted policy are considered to outweigh it.

45. Overall it is considered that the proposal conserves and enhances the setting and character of the barn, as well as the Grade II Listed Building Blackburn House. The application is considered to accord with Policies SP2, SP4, L1, L2 and L3 of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Local Plan 2015-2030, as well as paragraphs 135, 189 and 214 of the NPPF (2024).

Recommendation

46. It is recommended that permission is GRANTED subject to a Section 106 Legal Agreement to secure local occupancy restriction and holiday let use and conditions including the following:
    - Time limit
    - Accord with plans
    - Approval of design and construction details including reuse of lintel
    - Inclusion of wildlife enhancement
    - Control over removal of trees
    - Rebuilding of drystone wall
    - Approval of roof covering to extension
    - Removal of permitted development rights
    - Provision and retention of parking