Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

Planning Committee

14 October 2025

Applicant: Mr J Pool

Parish: Melbecks

Officer: **Dan** Puttick

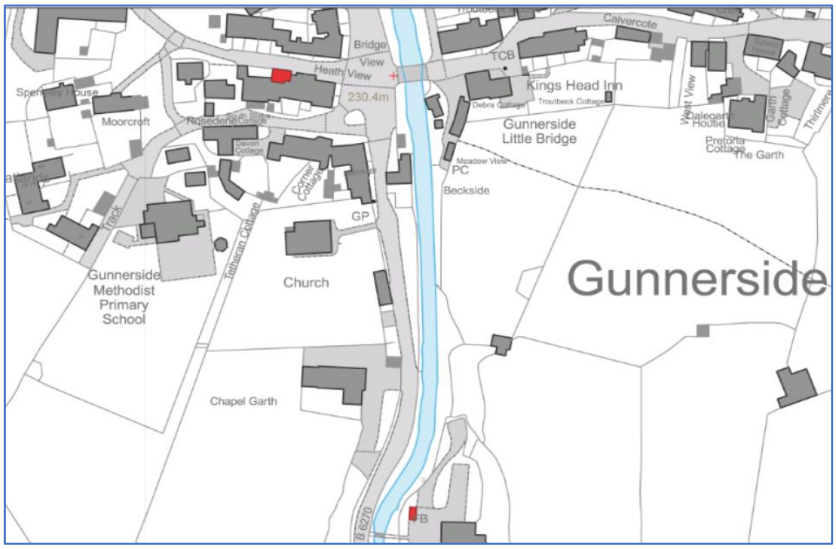
Application No: R/05/20B

Site Address: The Old Stable/Coach House, Gunnerside, Richmond, DL11 6LE

Proposal: Full planning permission for conversion of existing stable/coach house to residential use for local occupancy or tourist accommodation

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: in the opinion of the Head of Development Management it is in the best interests of the National Park Authority that the application is considered by the Committee.

Application Site

3. The Old Stable/Coach House is a traditional stone building which lies on the south side of the minor road leading west out of Gunnerside towards Ivelet. It fronts directly onto the road behind a narrow grass verge.

4. The building sits with its gable facing the road, with a single storey element to the left. There is a large cart door opening to the front with a door to the first floor above. There is also a single door to the single storey element.

5. The building sits between, and forward of, two residential properties, with its west wall forming the boundary to the house next door. Existing cottages are positioned opposite, with windows overlooking the application site.

Proposal

6. It is proposed to convert the building to form a local occupancy dwelling or holiday cottage, in accordance with Policy L2 of the Local Plan (2015-2030).

7. The proposed development would involve the glazing of the cart door opening and first floor door opening in the front elevation. A new window would be inserted in the west elevation, overlooking the front garden of the neighbouring house at Whyllsym. Two rooflights would be inserted into each roof slope.

8. The proposed conversion would provide one-bedroomed accommodation over two floors. There would be a living room/kitchen on the ground floor, with a bedroom and shower room on the first floor. Refuse containers would be within the property, accessed externally via the doorway in the single storey element.

9. Parking is proposed off-site, approximately 255m to the south of the application site. The parking space is located within the existing farm complex to the south, accessible via a vehicular crossing over a ford, a pedestrian footbridge across the watercourse or public footpath from the village on the eastern side of the beck.

Relevant Planning History

10. The following applications are relevant:

    R/05/20A - Full planning permission for conversion of existing stable/coach house to residential use for local occupancy or tourist accommodation - Withdrawn 27/10/2023

YD1/5/20 - Alterations to and change of use of existing garage, loft and coalhouse to form single separate dwellinghouse – Refused 11/11/1976

Consultations

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

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.

Highways - The Highway Authority considers that in the absence of adequate on-site parking space the proposed development would be likely to result in vehicles being parked outside the site on the County Highway to the detriment of the free flow of traffic and road safety.

Melbecks Parish Council Concerns raised in relation to parking and that doors would open onto the highway.

Natural England The advice provided in our previous response applies equally to this amendment. The proposed amendments to the original application are unlikely to have significantly different impacts on the natural environment than the original proposal.

Environmental Health Officer Have considered the potential impact on amenity and the likelihood that the proposed development will cause a nuisance to neighbouring properties, and consider that the impact will be low. Recommends condition on unexpected contamination.

Senior Listed Building Officer No objections. The building contributes towards the significance of Gunnerside Conservation Area, and the proposed works will conserve its traditional character and enable the sympathetic retention and re-use of the building.

Public Responses

Four objections received. The following is a summary of the concerns raised:

- Doors opening directly onto the road would raise highway safety issues;
- The use of the property as a workshop at ground floor level could harm the amenity of nearby residents;
- The glazed opening at first floor level will lead to overlooking and loss of privacy;
- There is no vehicle parking at the site. Vehicles parking at the property will cause an obstruction of the highway.

Other issues raised include civil issues, which are not material planning considerations and cannot be attributed any weight.

Assessment

Key Issues:
- Principle of the Development
- Heritage Impacts
- Highway Safety
- Residential amenity
- Nature Recovery
- Parish Council comments
- Equality Act

Principle of the Development

11. The Yorkshire Dales Local Plan (2015-2030) is the current development plan. Policy SP3 (Spatial Strategy) of the Local Plan establishes a settlement hierarchy for the National Park. The policy seeks to direct new housing development to areas within or adjacent to the settlements listed in Table 1, which includes Gunnerside as a Service Village.

12. Policy SP4 (Development quality) requires all development proposals to respect the amenity of neighbours and provide an adequate level of amenity for future occupants.

13. Policy L2 (Conversion of traditional buildings) 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.

14. 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 it’s 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.

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

16. Paragraph 49 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to the stage of preparation of the emerging plan, the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies, and the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the Framework.

17. The National Park Authority formally submitted the Yorkshire Dales National Park Local Plan 2025-2040 to the Secretary of State for independent examination on 20 August 2025. In line with paragraph 49 of the NPPF, the authority may give weight to relevant policies within the emerging plan.

18. Policy AB2 of the emerging plan states that proposals for the change of use of low intensity traditional buildings to high intensity residential, and employment uses will only be permitted where:

- The building is a heritage asset worth conserving and has not already been extensively modified, and;
- The location is within an existing settlement, a group of farm buildings, or the building and its associated historic yard abuts a sealed metalled road maintainable by the Highway Authority, or a sealed metalled private road that connects to a road maintainable by the Highway Authority, and;
- Proposals for change of use to a dwellinghouse for continuous occupation will be subject to a local occupancy restriction.

19. The policy goes on to state that proposals for the change of use to self-contained holiday letting will only be permitted where:

- It would appropriate conserve a listed building in relation to Policy AB1 or,
- It would support a farm or rural estate business diversification scheme (Policy E2) and the holiday unit can be tied to the agricultural unit to prevent it being sold off separately, and
- The use will be capable of effective supervision and management to avoid noise and other disturbance, and
- The use is restricted to a maximum of 28 days short stay letting by individual households.

20. Traditional buildings form an important part of the architectural and historical fabric of the National Park. Policy AB2 of the emerging plan is a conservation-orientated policy aimed at securing the long-term future of traditional buildings in a manner that conserves their intrinsic value. Proposals for high intensity residential uses are required under the policy to be tied to the occupancy criteria set out in Appendix 5 of the emerging plan, to ensure they contribute towards local housing needs. Exceptions are made for farm and rural estate diversification proposals for short term holiday letting.

21. The application proposes a high intensity use of a traditional building within the settlement of Gunnerside and therefore satisfies the location requirements of Policy L2 of the Local Plan. The application seeks full planning permission for conversion to a house for local occupancy or for tourist accommodation, both of

which would be acceptable in accordance with Policy L2 of the Local Plan. However, whilst the principle of converting the building to such uses would be acceptable in accordance with Policy L2 of the Local Plan, the proposals would conflict with the approach set out in Policy AB2 of the emerging Local Plan. This conflict attracts weight in the overall planning balance, and consideration of other issues set out below.

Heritage Impacts

22. The site is located within the Swaledale and Arkengarthdale Conservation Area.
Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that, with respect to any buildings or other land in a Conservation Area, special attention should be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that Area.

23. Local Plan Policy L1 (Heritage Assets) states that development proposals affecting a designated heritage asset will be permitted provided they conserve or enhance its significance. Proposals that result in less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the public benefits of the proposal clearly outweigh the loss of significance.

24. This echoes advice in the NPPF, which states at paragraph 215 that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

25. The current building has a utilitarian character which reflects its former use as a workshop/garage. Likely dating to the late 19th century, it is constructed of traditional materials and its simple form and appearance, together with its position within the street, contributes positively towards the character of the area. It is considered that the building constitutes a non-designated heritage asset for the purposes of Policy L1 of the Local Plan.

26. The proposed development would utilise existing openings within the buildings and would retain the integrity of the building, aided through retention of the stone slates within the roof. Whilst the development would result in some domestication of the building, it would not be to an extent that would be considered harmful to its character, which would remain discernible.

27. The proposed development would preserve the character and appearance of the traditional building in line with Policy L1 of the Local Plan, and in doing so would preserve the character of the Conservation Area.

Highway Safety

28. Local Plan Policy SP4 states that all proposals should have appropriate access and parking provision. Paragraph 116 of the NPPF states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.

29. The Highway Authority initially considered that in the absence of adequate on-site parking space the proposed development would be likely to result in vehicles being parked outside the site on the adopted road network to the detriment of the free flow of traffic and road safety. The effect of this would lead to unacceptable impacts on highway safety.

30. In response to the objection from the Highway Authority the applicant submitted an additional plan showing off-site parking for one vehicle. This space would be provided in a farmyard approximately 250m south of the application site. The only vehicular access to the site is across a ford over the Gunnerside Beck, with pedestrian access available via a footbridge about 30m north of the ford, or via the public footpath which runs northwards from the farm into the village on the eastern side of the Beck.

31. The Highway Authority was consulted on this additional plan, but maintained an objection for the following reasons:

    i. The vehicular access from the agricultural site onto the B6270 has sub-standard visibility splays based upon the prevailing speed limit of the adjacent road.
    ii. Pedestrians walking between the property and the parking space would be required to walk along a rural stretch of road subject to the National Speed Limit with no footway, no lighting and a series of bends.
    iii. It is generally considered that the parking space is too far from the property and occupiers of the property (particularly if it is used as tourist accommodation as per the title of the application) would not be inclined to use it.

32. Considering these grounds in turn, not only the visibility splay being inadequate, but the sole vehicular access is across a ford and there is no guarantee that it would be available all-year round due to potential flooding events. As such it is considered that the proposed access is inadequate on technical grounds.

33. The parking space is approximately 255m from the application site. Pedestrian access would be along the B6270 which is subject to national speed limits and has no dedicated footpath or street lighting. Whilst this arrangement might be suitable during the summer months (when the route is already well-used by walkers and holiday-makers) it would present a different proposition during the dark winter months, to the extent that it could prejudice road safety. Similarly, the alternative route via the public footpath is unlit and likely to be undesirable during darkness, particularly for holiday makers with luggage and other things.

34. For these reasons, it is unlikely that the parking space would provide a feasible option for occupants of the property. It is likely that users would seek alternative parking spaces nearer to the property, and would encourage loading/unloading immediately adjacent to the building which would cause an obstruction of the highway. There are a number of properties within the village without on-site parking and this arrangement is therefore not uncommon, however there is limited parking available and the constrained and restricted nature of the highway network immediately adjacent to the site are factors which would be problematic, particularly during check-in/departure times. The added pressure on public car parking spaces would also be likely to contribute towards further indiscriminate parking within Gunnerside.

35. For these reasons, the proposals fail to demonstrate that on-site access and parking provision can be provided and the off-site provision proposed is not considered to be a suitable alternative. The development may therefore result in indiscriminate parking, to the detriment of the free flow of traffic, pedestrian or highway safety, and the amenity of existing residents, as a consequence. The proposal would therefore fail to provide development of an appropriate quality and would conflict with the aims of Policy SP4 of the Local Plan.

Residential Amenity

36. Local Plan Policy SP4 states that all development proposals should respect the amenity of neighbours and the adequate level of amenity for its future occupants in relation to nearby uses.

37. Several near neighbours have objected to the proposed development on the grounds that it would detract from their residential amenity. The concerns raised largely relate to issues of overlooking and noise disturbance through party walls. There are also concerns relating to property rights and interests, which are not material planning considerations.

38. The application proposes the insertion of glazing to the opening at first floor level within the building, which would give rise to overlooking of properties on the opposite side of the narrow highway. The effect of this would be harmful to the amenity of occupants of nearby properties, however this could be overcome by the imposition of a planning condition requiring the use of obscure glazing.

39. The proposed first floor window to the front elevation would serve the bedroom and directly overlook houses on the opposite side of the road which are less than 21m distant. While a neighbouring house has a similar relationship with the houses opposite the proposed development would have an unneighbourly impact where none previously existed.

40. An additional window is proposed in the west elevation serving the bedroom at first floor level. This would overlook the garden area of the adjacent property. While this front garden is already in public view from the road, it is the only

outside space available to this house. The proposed window would be in the party wall and while it would afford no direct views into the neighbour's house, its close relationship with their front garden is such that it would detract from their privacy/amenity contrary to Policy SP4. Although at a low level within the bedroom, the window would result in some harm to the amenity of occupants of the neighbouring property. However, as with the larger opening on the north elevation, this harm could be overcome by the imposition of a suitably worded planning condition requiring the window to utilise obscure glazing.

41. Local Plan Policy SP4 (Development quality) requires all development proposals to provide an adequate level of amenity for future occupants. The Government has published nationally described space standards and Policy C1 of the emerging Local Plan states that new homes will need to comply with these standards, the purpose of which is to ensure adequate living conditions for future occupants of proposed dwellings.

42. The proposed development would provide restricted living accommodation over two floors, falling below nationally described space standards of 58sqm for a 1 bedroom, 2 person, 2 storey property. Minimum floor to ceiling heights cannot be achieved within the property, and as a result the accommodation would be cramped and unsuitable for permanent occupation as a residential dwelling. While a small bin store can be provided behind the existing door in the single storey element, the proposed dwelling would have no curtilage and no outdoor amenity space. In addition, as the neighbours have pointed out, the only doors to the dwelling would open directly onto the narrow verge and the use of conditions to address issues relating to overlooking would offer no outlook from the bedroom at first floor level.

43. In summary, whilst conditions could be imposed to overcome issues relating to the impact of the development on the amenity of neighbouring residents, the development would fail to provide adequate standards of amenity for future occupants if the property were to be occupied as a residential dwelling. The proposals therefore conflict with Policy SP4 of the Local Plan, and Policy C1 of the emerging Local Plan.

Nature Recovery

44. The application relates to the conversion of an existing building and is therefore exempt from the requirement to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act (as inserted by the Environment Act 2021).

45. The application has been accompanied by a Bat Survey, which found no evidence of significant roosting in any location within the building. The survey recommends the installation of a bat box, which would deliver biodiversity enhancement in accordance with Policy W2 of the Local Plan and could be

secured by an appropriately worded condition in the event that planning permission were to be granted.

Parish Council Comments

46. The Council does not formally object but comments that it has reviewed the planning application and wanted to raise a concern about the use of folding doors on the front of the building straight onto the road and the lack of parking in the area.

Equality Act

47. 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.

48. 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

49. The application proposes the conversion of a traditional building within the settlement of Gunnerside, with the intention of it being used either as a permanent residential dwelling or as holiday accommodation for tourists. The principle of the development would be acceptable in accordance with Policy L2 of the Local Plan (2015-2030), however the proposals would conflict with Policy AB2 of the emerging Local Plan which can now be afforded weight in line with paragraph 49 of the NPPF.

50. For the reasons set out above, the use of the building as permanent residential accommodation would be unacceptable as occupants would not benefit from adequate standards of amenity having regard to Policy SP4 of the Local Plan and nationally described space standards. Policy C1 of the emerging Local Plan requires new residential development to comply with these standards, and as such there is conflict with the emerging Local Plan. The use of the property as tourism accommodation would be considered acceptable in relation to these issues, however such a use would conflict with the aims of Policy AB2 of the emerging Local Plan.

51. The proposed development would fail to make on-site provision for access and vehicular parking in accordance with Policy SP4 of the Local Plan. Off-site provision would be located some distance from the property, and is not

considered to be an adequate alternative. The development would therefore be likely to give rise to highway safety issues associated with pedestrians using the highway to access the property, through indiscriminate parking and obstruction of the highway, or by increasing demand for the very limited number of public car parking spaces available within the settlement. In light of the objection from the highway authority, the proposed development is considered to be contrary to Policy SP4 of the Local Plan.

52. Whilst the development would not impact on protected species and could provide some biodiversity enhancement features, these positive benefits would not outweigh the harm identified above and it is therefore recommended that the application be refused.

Recommendation

53. It is recommended that permission be **Refused** for reasons based on the following:

1. In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, the use of the building as a permanent residential dwelling would not be suitable having regard to nationally described space standards, and would fail to provide future permanent residents with adequate levels of amenity. The proposal is contrary to the aims of Policy SP4 of the Yorkshire Dales Local Plan (2015-2030) and would conflict with the objectives within paragraph 135 of the NPPF. The use of the building for tourism accommodation would conflict with the aims of Policy AB2 of the emerging Local Plan, which can be seeks to conserve traditional buildings in a way which contributes towards addressing local housing need.

2. The proposed development would fail to make on-site provision for access and vehicular parking in accordance with Policy SP4 of the Local Plan. The proposed off-site provision would be located some distance from the property, and is not considered to be an adequate alternative. The lack of useable off street parking would result in on street parking giving rise to congestion to the detriment of highway safety, the free flow of traffic and the amenity of residents. As such the proposal is contrary to the aims of Policy SP4 of the Yorkshire Dales Local Plan (2015-2030) and paragraph 116 of the NPPF.