Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

Committee: Planning

Date: 15 July 2025

Applicant: Mr Burcher

Parish: Grassington

Officer: Claire Hodgson

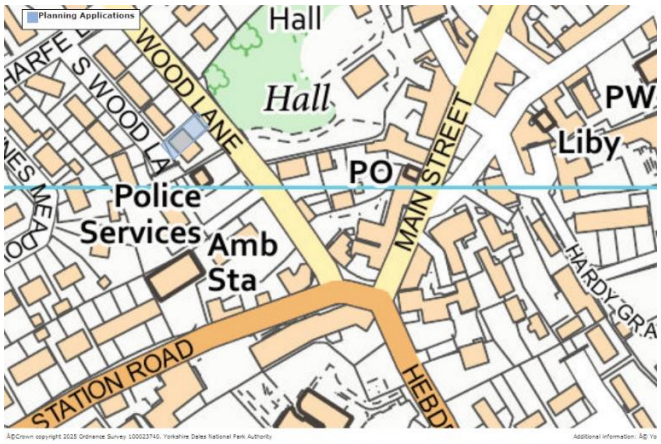
Application No: C/33/161A

Site Address: 13, South Wood Lane, Grassington, Skipton, BD23 5NA

Proposal: Householder planning permission for conversion of existing garage into bedroom and en suite, existing rear extension to be rebuilt full width of the existing property, alterations to existing fenestration and proposed external door to side elevation, existing external pebble dash render to be painted and existing windows to be painted / replaced, installation of solar panels to the existing roof, and air source heat pump.

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 application has been submitted on behalf of an employee of the Authority and objections have been received.

Application Site

3. 13, South Wood Lane is an interwar pebble-dashed, semi-detached house, one of the final pair at the end of a narrow cul-de-sac. It has previously been extended to the side and rear. South Wood Lane lies in the area to the west of the Market Square in Grassington.

Proposal

4. This application seeks permission for the conversion of an existing garage into a bedroom/gym and en-suite, the rebuilding of a rear extension to create a new full-width extension, the installation of solar panels and an air source heat pump, alterations to existing fenestration and side door, and the painting of the existing external pebble dash.

Relevant Planning History

5. The current rear extension was granted permission under reference YDS/33/161 on 13 January 1981.

Consultations

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

Wildlife Conservation Officer – application complies with policy W1, not with policy W2. [NB Wildlife enhancement measures required under policy W2 can be conditioned.]

Highways – recommends refusal due to the absence of adequate on-site parking. South Wood Lane is a private road and therefore Highways can only offer advice.

Environmental Health – no known contaminated land implications regarding the proposed development and has not identified any environmental protection issues that give cause for concern.

Grassington PC – objection for the following reasons:

- Only parking provision for 1 car which would cause huge congestion;
- Property is used as an air bnb so negative impact to housing policy;
- Over development – damage to the environment by over developing this area;
- Cars parked would block access for emergency vehicles to other properties;
- The noise created from the heat pump;
- Strong resident objections with the Parish Council support.

Public Responses

Public responses received at the time of writing: 3

7. A site notice was posted on 28 March 2025. Public responses are summarised below:
    - Objections to the air source heat pump on both aesthetic grounds [it was originally to be sited on the front elevation of the property, now relocated to the rear] and noise.
    - Objections on the grounds of parking and access problems on South Wood Lane. The loss of the garage and parking space would exacerbate the parking problems on the narrow lane which impede access of emergency vehicles, delivery drivers and others.

Assessment

Key Issues:

- Principle of development and planning policy
- Design and visual impact
- Effect on neighbours
- Wildlife enhancement
- Sustainability
- Parish Council comments
- Equality Act

Principle of development and planning policy

8. This is a householder application for the extension and alteration of a dwellinghouse and therefore considered chiefly under SP4 (Design quality) of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Local Plan (2015-2030). Polices W1 and W2 (Wildlife species and Biodiversity enhancement) are also relevant.

Design and visual impact

9. The proposal seeks to replace the current single storey rear extension, which sits at right angles to the host building, with a full-width single-story extension to form a large kitchen/living/dining area. Large patio doors and full-height window will light the room along with three skylights. A side door will replace a current side door currently located in the main house. Originally a flat-roofed box-style extension was proposed; this has been amended to a pitched roof, hipped to the north-west along the line of the host building's hipped roof thereby responding more positively to the existing building and reducing the massing of the extension.

10. Most of the houses on South Wood Lane have undergone extensions of various sizes and designs. Whilst this is a large extension on an already extended house, it is not publicly visible and will not adversely affect the character or appearance of the surrounding area. The proposed materials, including the use of pebble dash and stonework to match existing, with uPVC and aluminium windows and doors, are similar to those of the current house and to others within the street.

11. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal meets the design criteria set out in policy SP4.

Effect on neighbours

12. Neighbour concerns, and the objections from Grassington Parish Council, have focused on two issues – parking congestion on South Wood Road and the installation of the air source heat pump.

13. South Wood Road is an unadopted lane, narrow by modern standards. As the houses have been extended, private parking space has been lost and pressure for on-street parking has increased. As a cul-de-sac, vehicles need to turn round and there is a small turning area opposite number 13 and its neighbour, an area sometimes also used for parking.

14. The current garage is proposed for conversion to bedroom/gym and en-suite under this application, was part of an earlier extension carried out in 1981. Internally it is 4.5 by 2.8 metres, reflecting an era of smaller vehicles than those of today, and is smaller than a standard parking space as prescribed by the Highway Authority. This leaves one standard parking space on the property immediately in front of the garage which measures 4.8m x 2.4metres. The removal of the air source heat pump from the front of the property in the amended plans means this parking space is now proposed to be retained.

15. As an unadopted road, the Highway Authority can only advise on the application. They have advised refusal based on the lack of parking as there is only one space and North Yorkshire Council's interim parking guidance is that a house of four bedrooms or more requires a minimum of three parking spaces. However, the house is already a four-bedroom house with one parking space. As the old garage is too small to use as a garage, its use as a habitable room will not affect the number of off street parking spaces available. Furthermore the garage could be converted to a habitable room under permitted development (The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, part 1, class A) without the requirement for planning permission. Therefore, it is considered that a lack of off street parking would not be a sustainable reason for refusing permission.

16. The issue of noise created by the running of air source heat pumps has been raised. In the amended location on the rear of the extension, the noise level of the proposed unit for the nearest habitable room of a neighbouring property is within the acceptable levels of the MSC 020 (Microgeneration Certification Scheme) standard being approximately 40.3dB(A) (below the acceptable level of 42dB(A). Therefore it is considered that the operation of the heat pump is unlikely to have an undue effect on the amenity of neighbouring residents.

Sustainability

17. The addition of solar panels and the replacement of the heating system with an air source heat pump will improve the environmental sustainability of the house in line with policy SP4 paragraph d).

Protected species and wildlife enhancement

18. A bat statement was submitted with this application. The Wildlife Conservation Officer considers that from the photographs and description provided within this statement, it is considered unlikely that roosting bats will be affected by the proposal. An informative will be added to any permission granted in case roosting bats or nesting birds were found during works.

19. No biodiversity enhancement has been submitted with the application. This can be secured by condition so that two bird or bat boxes would be installed within six months.

Parish Council Comments

20. Grassington Parish Council was consulted initially and on the amended plans. It has been confirmed that Parish Council did not wish to change the objection or comments submitted in the first instance for this application. The comments relating to parking and access on the road have been addressed above, as have concerns over the air source heat pump. In terms of over-development, there are precedents for such development in the street and the size of the proposed rear extension has been addressed in the design section above. The Parish Council believes this property is used as an Airbnb however the property is used as a permanently occupied dwelling.

Equality Act

21. 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.

22. One of the residents of the property is visually impaired and it is understood that the purpose of converting the garage is to create a multi-use space which could be a bedroom and provide an accessible space for that family member. A designated quiet room is required to use computer screen reader software and to exercise safely with safe access to a shower and toilet. Mobility may worsen over time and a downstairs space will provide for the future.

23. It is considered that the proposal would benefit a person with a protected characteristic, advancing opportunities for them, and as such weight should be accorded in favour of the proposal.

Conclusion

24. The proposed extension and alterations to 13 South Wood Lane are similar to the development of other houses along the cul-de-sac, most of which have seen alteration and extension over time. Amendments to the initial proposal have improved the location of the air source heat pump and lessened its potential effect on neighbours and the streetscene. This has also ensured that the current parking space is retained. Whilst the parking and access issues on the street are acknowledged, the proposal is unlikely to further exacerbate these. The proposal would also benefit a person with a protected characteristic under the Equality Act, a significant factor in its favour. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal meets with polices SP4 and W1 of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Local Plan (2015-2030) and will meet condition W2 via condition.

Recommendation

25. It is recommended that permission/consent is GRANTED subject to conditions including the following:

- Lighting to meet Dark Sky standards
- Installation of bat or bird boxes in line with policy W2
- Solar panels to be matt black
- Maximum decibel level of the air source heat pump