

North York Moors National Park Authority

Delegated decision report

Application number

NYM/2021/0229/FL

Development description

erection of replacement stable block

Site address

land near to Station Square, Ravenscar

Parish

Staintondale

Case officer

Miss Helen Webster

Director of Planning's Recommendation

Approval subject to the following:

Reason(s) for refusal

Refusal reason code	Refusal reason text
1.	By reason of its scale, bulk, design and materials the proposed stable building is considered to be harmful to the landscape character of this part of the National Park, contrary to the requirements of Strategic Policy A of the NYM Local Plan. The proposed design is more characteristic of an industrial or agricultural building and therefore fails to comply with the standard of design required by Policy CO20 which seeks to ensure new equestrian development is of a scale and design appropriate for its setting. Although proposed to occupy the footprint of an existing structure, the development site is located away from the host property and therefore the oversized and industrial nature of the building would dominate views from Station Square and appear out of scale in this predominantly domestic setting, detrimental to the visual amenity of the area.

Parish

No objection.

Natural England

No objection.

Third party responses

None.

Publicity expiry

Site notice expiry date: 20 May 2021.



Background

4 Station Square is the end property of a short row of terraced houses overlooking a grassed area at the eastern limit of Ravenscar. The properties are of red brick construction with rendered details and slate roofs. There is a tea-room operated from the property located at the north-east end of the terrace and the application property forms the south-western end property, abutting the old railway line and open fields. There are a small number of other residential properties in the area and nearby is a modest utilitarian building of red brick under slate construction which is used as an equipment store by HM Coastguard.

This application seeks full planning permission for the replacement of a dilapidated timber stable building with a large steel-framed building to be used as stabling in the paddock to the south-west of the property. As originally submitted, the proposal showed a large building or ridge and gable design with blockwork walls with Yorkshire boarding above and a corrugated metal sheet roof. One gable elevation characterised by a horizontal roller-shutter door and one long elevation fitted with a single width door. The floor plan showed a single internal division providing one stable and one store.

Officers sought amendments to the size and design of the proposal in order to reflect the domestic equestrian use proposed. However, the applicant explained that due to the adverse weather and high winds experienced in this location that conventional stables were not appropriate. In addition, one of the horses to be stabled was a shire horse and therefore additional head height and a separate indoor grooming area was required. With the exception of fully cladding the building with timber, he was not prepared to offer any further revisions.

Policy Context

The relevant policies contained within the NYM Local Plan to consider with this application are Strategic Policy A (Achieving National Park Purposes and Sustainable Development) and Policy CO20 (Equestrian Development for Private Use).

SPA states that a positive approach to new development within the Park will be taken in line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development and where decisions are consistent with National Park Statutory Purposes (applying the Sandford Principle if necessary). Development will be supported where it: is a high quality of design which respects the local landscape and built heritage; supports the function and vitality of communities; protects or enhances natural capital and ecosystem services; maintains and enhances geodiversity and biodiversity through conservation; builds resilience to climate change; makes sustainable use of resources and; does not reduce the quality of soil, air and water in and around the National Park.

Policy CO20 relates to Equestrian Development for Private Use and seeks to permit applications for equestrian use (including stables, outdoor arenas and permanent field shelters) where there would be no adverse landscape impact; where existing buildings are used as far as possible and where new buildings are closely associated with existing buildings; where the scale/design is appropriate; where it will not disturb neighbouring amenities; lighting is discreet and where there is adequate parking for horse-related vehicles.

Main issues

The main issues to consider with this application are whether the proposed replacement building is of an acceptable size, scale and design in relation to its proposed domestic equestrian use and wider landscape setting.

Siting and Landscape Impact

The proposed building would be located in an open paddock, approximately 40m from the host property. The site is clearly visible in public views from Station Square and from the old railway line (known as the Cinder Track) which is a very popular walking and cycling route. The site does not benefit from a great deal of screening from either trees or topography and no other buildings (other than the structure to be replaced) exist at the development site.

The existing building is a modest structure constructed of mixed materials. It is not an attractive building and is in a poor state of repair. However, as a result of its modest proportions it is not considered to be a prominent feature and therefore does not result in unduly harmful landscape impact. The building is compatible with the size of the associated land and of a scale which reflects a domestic equestrian use.

The Local Plan recognises that equestrian development can have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the National Park landscape, which is afforded the highest level of protection from development and activity. Local Plan Policy seeks to assist in striking a balance between a resident's hobby and landscape protection and a key determinative matter is whether a proposal is of an appropriate scale and not harmful to local landscape.

By reason of the predominantly residential setting and absence of adequate landscape features or other similar buildings on site, the replacement building is considered likely to result in landscape harm. It is not considered that there is a suitable context for the proposal which is significantly larger and less domestic in appearance in comparison to the building to be replaced.

Size, Scale, Design and Materials

The agricultural/light industrial appearance of the building does not adequately reflect the proposed domestic equestrian use and is not considered appropriate for the setting where it will be seen in the context of residential dwellings.

The proposal is therefore not appropriate for the domestic nature and setting of the development site, contrary to the requirements of CO20 (point 3 in particular).

The applicant's agent suggests that the proposal is not unlike other buildings in the locality (but does not identify them). However, where buildings of a similar design exist, they are largely for agricultural purposes in predominantly agricultural settings.

Officers have requested for the scheme to be amended to reduce the scale and mass of the building and to improve the design in a way that reflects the local vernacular and equestrian use. Officers have suggested alternative arrangements which have worked well in other areas of the National Park such as an L-shaped arrangement including a generous roof overhang to provide additional shelter from the weather and an area of hardstanding providing adequate facility for use by the farrier or for grooming and tacking up (and not a separate indoor area for care purposes as these duties are typically carried out within the stable).

In support of the proposal, the applicant has explained that other buildings have suffered extensive weather damage and in particular roof overhangs are vulnerable to wind damage. Further to this, the applicant has advised that they own large breeds of horses which require additional head height and a strong structure.

The Authority acknowledges that Ravenscar is an exposed area and that shire horses and cob type native breeds require a more robust structure with clear headroom but permanent stabling is not always necessary for native breeds which often only require shelter from extreme weather and other conditions (for example: the cold, prolonged periods of wet weather, heat and flies).

Although Officers accept that the existing building is of poor quality and appearance and that the application proposes an opportunity to achieve an enhancement for both parties through improved facilities and improved design, as presented, it is not considered that replacement structure meets current design requirements. The proposal is for a relatively tall and bulky industrialised building to serve horses used for hobby purposes on a modest parcel of land in a residential setting. Its character reflects that of an American barn which would be at odds with the character of the area and fail to contribute to local distinctiveness.

Summary

The proposed building is considered to be of excessive size and an inappropriate design for this village location which lacks adequate screening or other built context to sufficiently mitigate its visual impact. On balance, it is not considered that there is sufficient justification or compelling planning reasons to set aside adopted planning policies in this case. Notwithstanding the applicant's proposal to clad the whole structure in timber, the proposed building is considered to be of an excessive scale and is not of an acceptable design for its intended use or setting.

Whilst Officers are of the opinion a suitable compromise can be found through the submission of amended plans, it has not been possible to find such a solution and the applicant has confirmed the proposal is to be considered as submitted.

In view of the above, the proposal is not considered to accord with the requirements of Strategic Policy A and Policy CO20 of the NYM Local Plan and refusal is recommended.

Explanation of how the Authority has worked positively with the applicant/agent

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern with the proposal and bringing those concerns to the attention of the Agent, offering an opportunity to amend the scheme. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to resolve those matters during the consideration of this application. However, the Local Planning Authority has clearly set out, within its report, the steps necessary to remedy the harm identified within the reasons for refusal which may lead to the submission of a more acceptable proposal in the future. The Local Planning Authority is willing to provide pre-application advice in respect of any future application for a revised development.