

North York Moors National Park Authority

Plans list item 5, Planning Committee report 10 February 2022

Application reference number: NYM/2021/0175/FL

Development description: alterations, construction of single storey side extension

Site address: 2 Railway Cottages, Goathland

Parish: Goathland

Case officer: Mr Mark Hill

Applicant: Mr R Wood, 2 Railway Cottages, Goathland, Whitby, YO22 5NJ

Agent: BHD Partnership Ltd, Airy Hill Manor, Waterstead Lane, Whitby, North Yorkshire, YO21 1QB

Director of Planning's Recommendation

Refusal for the following reason(s):

Refusal reason code	Refusal reason text
1	Whilst the revised plans incorporate a mix of contrasting and traditional materials, the design of the proposed 'side' extension is considered poor and takes little account of the historical significance of the host property. As such the revised design would not accord with the requirements for Strategic Policy I and Policy CO17 and the principle of development to the side is particularly harmful as it upsets the visual balance and symmetry with the neighbouring property. There are no overriding public benefits which would outweigh the harm identified to the historical significance of this undesignated heritage asset.
2	Given the associated history and the architectural design of the existing building, its modest proportions, symmetry, and features; any poorly designed extension would be considered to harm the special qualities of the building, its significance and setting within the Conservation Area and therefore the proposed extension is not considered to accord with the requirements of Strategic Policy I. There are no overriding public benefits which would outweigh the harm identified to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

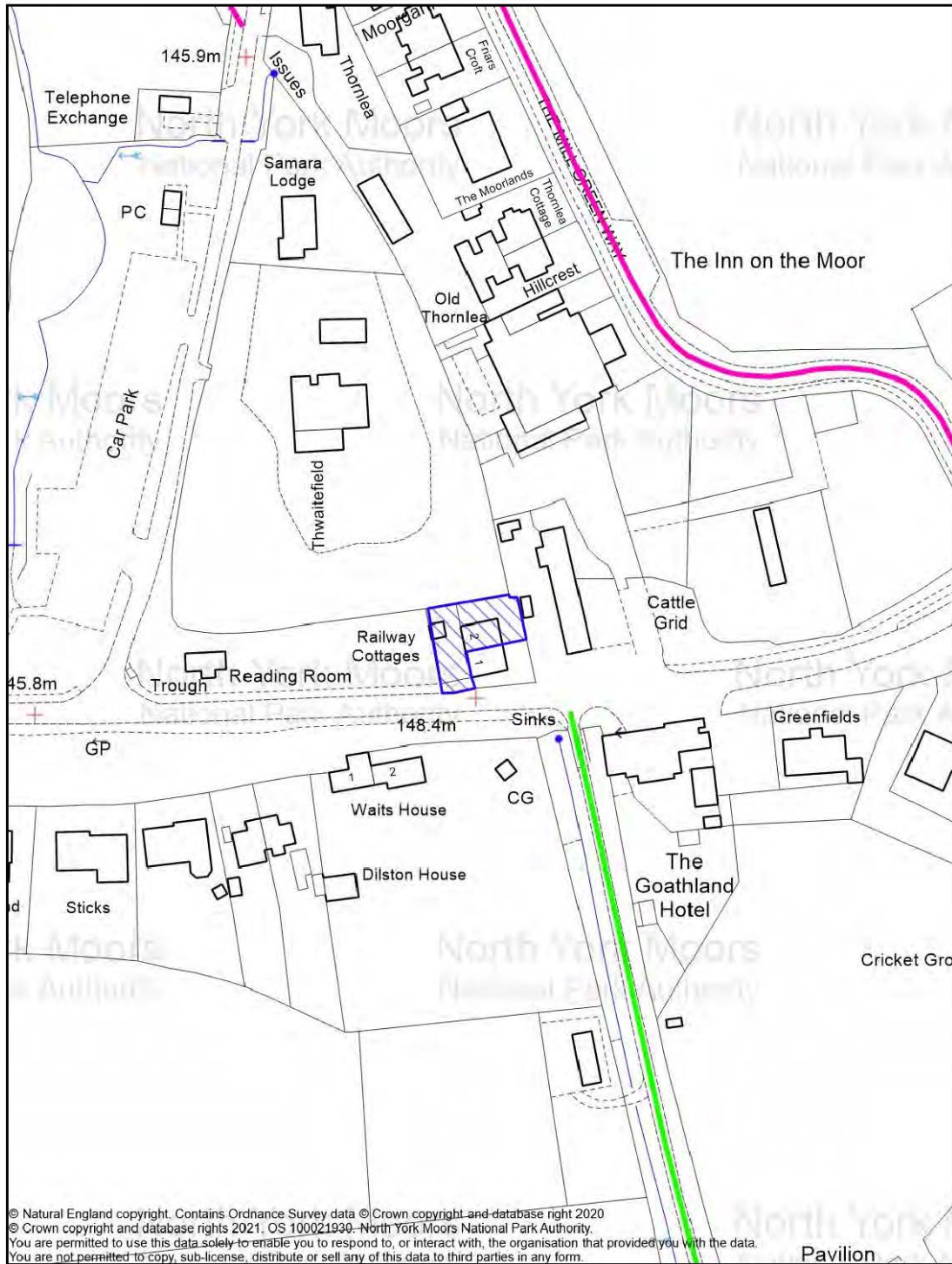
Map showing application site



North York Moors
National Park
Authority

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Scale: 1:1250



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Photo of property and garage to be replaced



Photo showing front of property and adjacent garage located on the former railway line



Consultation responses

Parish

I would like to confirm the Parish Council support this application with no objections.

Natural England

Based on the plans submitted, Natural England considers that the proposed development will not have significant adverse impacts on statutorily protected nature conservation sites.

Third party responses

Mark Howlett, 1 Railway Cottage, Goathland

I support the application. I feel the plans show a sympathetic and modest extension to the property offering the 72-year-old occupant more of a practical living space for them in their advancing years. There would be very little if practically any great alteration to the street landscape and it is not overlooked by any other neighbouring properties.

Consultation expiry

18 May 2021

Background

1 and 2 Railway Cottages are a pair of semi-detached properties constructed of stone and which now have a concrete tile roof, although this is likely to have previously been slate. The property has decorative buttresses and tall gable dormer details to the front and a cat-slide style roof extension to the rear and rear porch. Both of the pair of properties and the garage/workshop to the front of them, which is located on the former railway line are owned by the applicant. Originally, the domestic garage was proposed to be replaced under this application, it has now been removed from the application to deal with concerns about impact of construction on adjacent trees.

The only planning history attached to the property is for the existing porch in 1983 and an extension to this in 1993.

The application supporting documentation states that the extension will create an additional living space, including a ground floor bedroom with shower room. This will allow for a more usable and inclusive living environment, which will specifically help the occupier's quality of life. It goes on to state that the garden room will form a more suitably designed extension, which ties in with the traditional property appearance. The materials to be used, natural stone walls and tiled roof, are proposed to ensure a more sympathetic design than the more recent conservatory.

This application originally sought approval for the construction of a single storey side and rear garden room extension in a ‘wrap around’ design and replacement detached garage, at 2 Railway Cottages, Goathland, located at the centre of the Goathland Conservation Area.

At the July 2021 Planning Committee, Officers presented the application for refusal of planning permission based on three concerns, the impacts of the wrap around extension on the symmetry/balance of the paired semi-detached railway themed design and the village Conservation Area together with potential impact on trees from moving the garage rearwards with no accompanying arboriculture report. Members resolved that the proposed wrap-around design including side extension would be harmful to the property and its setting but felt that some form of extension was capable of being designed to reduce the heritage impact and deferred the application for further officer negotiations. Officers have since worked with the agent. Whilst some improvement has been achieved from improved fenestration, removal of wrap-around design and inclusion of less bulky contrasting materials the fundamental issue of not having a ‘side’ extension (to avoid discord in terms of the symmetry of the properties) could not be resolved. The applicants are seeking a downstairs bedroom and having a bedroom block the whole of the kitchen does not work for them, so they have asked that the application be determined as improved, to allow consideration of a possible appeal or dropping the plans completely.

The agent has written in support of the application stating that, “we feel it is very unusual to prevent a Non-Designated Heritage Asset from being extended in a way which seems to be your Authority’s preferred approach in your Design Guide. The extension is set back from the front to ensure the outline of the main elevation including buttresses presents its original appearance. The clients are very disappointed that some form of side extension will not be permitted”.

Main issues

The main issues relating to this application are the principle of extension of the host property and the design of the extension proposed. The relevant policies are Strategic Policy I, Policy CO17 and the guidance found within the Authority’s Design Guide.

Local Plan

Strategic Policy I - The Historic Environment states that all developments affecting the historic environment should make a positive contribution to the cultural heritage and local distinctiveness of the National Park through the conservation and, where appropriate, enhancement of the historic environment. Development should conserve heritage assets and their setting in a manner appropriate to their significance, especially those assets which contribute most to the distinctive character of the area, including:

Features that contribute to the wider historic landscape character of the North York Moors National Park such as the legacy of features associated with the area’s industrial, farming, fishing and monastic past;

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The vernacular building styles, materials and the form and layout of the historic built environment including Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and regionally or locally important non-designated structures and buildings.

Policy CO17 - Householder Development states that development within the domestic curtilage of dwellings should take full account of the character of the local area, the special qualities of the National Park and will only be permitted where:

- The scale, height, form, position, and design of the new development do not detract from the character and form of the original dwelling or its setting in the landscape.
- The development does not adversely affect the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers or result in inadequate levels of amenity for the existing dwelling; and
- The development reflects the principles outlined in the Authority's Design Guide.
- The design and detailing should complement the architectural form and character of the original dwelling and any new roofline should respect the form and symmetry of the original dwelling.

In the case of existing outbuildings and the development of new outbuildings, the following criteria must also be met:

- The outbuilding should be required for purposes incidental to the residential use of the main dwelling.
- Any new or extended outbuilding should be proportionate in size and clearly subservient to the main dwelling.
- New outbuildings should be located in close proximity to existing buildings.

Conservation implications

The property is one half of a pair of railway cottages associated with the Whitby to Pickering Railway (WPR). The railway cottages are situated along the alignment of the first and second phase of the WPR railway which took in an incline between Beck Hole and Goathland Bank Top. This railway was established in the 1830s as a horse drawn railway designed by George Stephenson. The railway line was later bought by George Hudson in 1846 as part of the York North Midland Railway. At this time the line was converted to lightweight locomotives which required that the line be substantially altered to accommodate locomotives. As locomotive technology progressed there was less need for an incline. The incline between Beck Hole and Goathland was perilous and following an accident it was closed and the deviation line was constructed in 1865. The 1865 deviation line connected with the early line between Grosmont and Esk Valley to the north and 2km south of Goathland to the south. As such the former line that passed through Goathland became redundant.

The property exhibits architectural qualities that are typical of railway architecture. However, more specifically it has certain features such as the relieving arches which are typical of known railway architect GT Andrews. Very similar architectural features are exhibited on nearby Grosmont Railway Station which is known to be designed by GT Andrews as part of the upgrading of the line by George Hudson in the 1840s. Given the design elements and the geographical location it is reasonable to conclude that the building was part of the 1845 developments of the line and has association with George Hudson and GT Andrews.

None of the above appears to have been assessed or is even discussed in the Heritage Statement, nor are the historic environment local policies referenced. The minimum requirement for Heritage Statements in the NPPF is that the Historic Environment Record be consulted, this also does not appear to have been complied with. A good Heritage Statement is a way of understanding our heritage assets and their significance in order to facilitate sympathetic development.

The building derives historical significance from its association with railway heritage, and the importance it plays within the Goathland Conservation Area and the wider heritage railway network that comprises the NYMR. It has evidential value as dating to a small period in time. It also derives significance from its architectural and artistic interest from its form and the symmetry between this building and that of the adjoining cottage, the pallet of materials and the modest proportions of the time. Although there have been some unsympathetic additions that appear to date from the latter half of the 20th century these are quite minor and do not interrupt appreciation of the buildings as a pair. The buildings as a pair are heritage asset in themselves (although undesignated) but they also make a positive contribution to and occupy a prominent position within the Goathland Conservation Area which is a designated heritage asset. They also make a positive contribution to the setting of other nearby heritage assets associated with the historical railway.

Proposed extension discussion

The proposal as revised, seeks to add a single storey side extension to the dwelling. The extension proposals, although seeking to use a mix of contrasting and traditional pallet of materials is considered poor as a result of the side extension upsetting the balance/symmetry with the neighbouring property. Although some care has been taken, to respect the architectural character, the location on the side would be considered to harm the architectural qualities of the building and its significance. Any outbuilding associated historically with the buildings were tucked behind the main buildings in order that they would not be visible from the railway line and mar the aesthetic of the cottages, even though this would be more visible in that part of the Conservation Area. This harm that would result from this development would be classed as 'less than substantial' (NPPF national policy test).

The Building Conservation Officer has objected to the proposal on design terms, and also the principle of extension on grounds that any extension would upset the balance of the pair of cottages and their design intent; this design intent (particularly that visible from the railway) was originally clearly considered more important than providing additional space for the inhabitants. Although the visibility of the site from the former railway line is significant; it should be remembered that Conservation Area designation applies in equal force to all elevations, regardless of visibility.

It has not been possible to design a scheme which meets the Authority's concerns regarding a side extension and the applicant's aspirations for improved accommodation.

The Authority's Ecologist has requested that a bat informative is added to any approval granted.

Conclusion

In the exercise of its planning functions with regards to development which affects a Conservation Areas or its setting, Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that the Authority shall pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. The proposals as a whole are contrary to the NPPF and SPI of the Local Plan, both of which state that great weight should be given to the conservation of the asset irrespective of the level of harm.

They also state that where a development would lead to less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset then these must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Strategic Policy I goes further to state that where there are no public benefits the Authority will refuse consent. As this is a Non-Designated Heritage Asset a balanced judgment has been made having regard to the scale of the harm likely to arise from the proposal and the significance of the heritage asset with the planning balance being considered to weigh against the development.

The benefits of the proposal are purely private and therefore offer no justification to the resulting harm to the heritage asset. In line with national policy and the requirements of the Development Plan therefore, the application is recommended for refusal.

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

The Authority's Officers have tried to work with the agent, however, having appraised the scheme against the Development Plan and other material considerations and concluded that the scheme represents a form of development so far removed from the vision of the sustainable development supported in the Development Plan that no changes could be negotiated to render the scheme acceptable.