

North York Moors National Park Authority

Delegated decision report

Application reference number: NYM/2023/0393

Development description: removal of agricultural building and siting of three holiday lodges with associated parking and landscaping

Site address: Raven Hill Farm, Dunsley Lane, Dunsley,

Parish: Newholm-Cum-Dunsley

Case officer: Miss Megan O'Mara

Applicant: Mr J and Mrs J Richardson

Raven Hill Farm, Dunsley Lane, Dunsley, Whitby, North Yorkshire, YO21 3TJ

Agent: Cheryl Ward Planning

fao: Cheryl Farrow, 24 Westfield Mews, Kirkbymoorside, York, YO62 6BA

Director of Planning's Recommendation

Refusal for the following reason:

Reason(s) for refusal

Refusal reason code	Refusal reason text
1	It is considered that the proposed development, by reason of the position, scale and design of the proposed units, would be visully intrusive and dominating, resulting in a harmful visual impact on the surrounding landscape and the setting of the adjacent listed buildings. The development would therefore be contrary to Strategic Policy A, Strategic Policy C, Strategic Policy I, Policy ENV11 and Policy UE2 of the Authroity's adopted policies, as set out within the Local Plan, together with Paragraph 182 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Consultation responses

Parish

No objection

Environmental Health

No objection

Third party responses

No responses

Publicity expiry

Advertisement/site notice expiry date: 31 January 2024

This photo shows the site as existing, looking towards the timber clad agricultural building which is to be demolished for the proposed development.



This photo shows the development site, including the building to be demolished to make way for the proposed cabins.



Background

Raven Hill Farm is an isolated farmstead in Dunsley, approximately half a kilometre from the coastline. The National Park boundary borders the farmstead to the north and west. The site comprises a mix of traditional stone and pantile buildings and modern agricultural buildings. The main farmhouse and adjoining stone and pantile outbuildings are Grade II listed; the remaining range of outbuildings are curtilage listed.

In 2004, planning permission and listed building consent was granted for the conversion of the range of stone outbuildings to form 5 no. holiday cottages. Permission was also granted in 1999 for a small, detached barn to be converted and used as a holiday cottage. In total, there are 7 no. units of holiday accommodation at present on site.

This application seeks planning permission for the siting of 3 no cabins for the use as holiday accommodation. The two larger cabins are approximately 8.5m long, 7.4m wide and measure 4.4m to the ridge. The smaller cabin is approximately 7.6m long, 6.1m wide and measures 4.3m to the ridge. The walls of the proposed units are vertically timber clad, and the roof is profile steel sheeting. It is stated that the roof would be dark grey, however they are shown to be green on the plans.

Main issues

Local Plan

Strategic Policy A relates to Achieving National Park Purposes and Sustainable Development. Within the North York Moors National Park a positive approach to new development will be taken, in line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and where decisions are consistent with National Park statutory purposes. New development should conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park and also promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public. Where there is an irreconcilable conflict between the statutory purposes the Sandford Principle will be applied, and greater weight will be attached to the first purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park.

Strategic Policy C relates to the quality and design of development within the National Park. The policy seeks to ensure that proposed development maintains and enhances the distinctive character of the National Park through appropriate siting, orientation, layout and density together with carefully considered scale, height, massing and form. Proposals should incorporate good quality construction materials and design details that reflect and complement the architectural character and form of the original building and/or that of the local vernacular.

Strategic Policy I relates specifically to development affecting the Historic Environment. The policy 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.

Policy ENV11 relates specifically to Historic Settlements and the Built Heritage. The policy states that development affecting the built heritage of the North York Moors should reinforce its distinctive historic character by fostering a positive and sympathetic relationship with traditional local architecture, materials and construction. High standards of design will be promoted to conserve and enhance the built heritage, settlement layouts and distinctive historic, cultural and architectural features.

Policy UE2 relates specifically to Camping, Glamping, Caravans and Cabins. The policy states that development will only be permitted for small scale holiday accommodation (such as tents, pods, yurts, teepees, shepherd huts, cabins, chalets, caravans and motorhomes etc.) where it is within Helmsley or the main built up area of a settlement listed in the hierarchy outlined in Strategic Policy B and it is in close proximity to an existing residential unit which will be used to manage the accommodation, or; where it is in Open Countryside and is not isolated from an existing business or residential unit

which will be used to manage the accommodation. The development must not cause unacceptable harm in terms of noise and activity on the immediate area or detract from the character, tranquillity or visual attractiveness of the area. The accommodation should be of a high-quality design which complements its surroundings.

Discussion

Principle of development

Policy UE2 relates specifically to small scale holiday accommodation such as tents, pods, yurts, teepees, shepherd huts, cabins, chalets, caravans and motorhomes etc. The intention of this policy is to allow for small scale and sensitively designed holiday accommodation to support local businesses and allow people to enjoy the special qualities of the National Park whilst avoiding sporadic development in unsuitable and unsustainable locations. The policy directs new holiday accommodation to the main built-up area of listed settlements or areas where there is already an existing business or dwelling which can be used to manage the site. This could include on a farm or at a public house for example. This is to ensure there is adequate and active management of the site to prevent any local amenity issues such as noise or other disturbance from occurring.

The policy states that development can only be supported where the units of accommodation would not be isolated from an existing business or residential unit which will be used to manage the accommodation. In this instance, the development site is located within the open countryside and as such, the principle of sensitively siting a small number of units, of appropriate scale and design, could be acceptable. Therefore, it is important to clarify that with this particular application, the Authority is not objecting to the proposed introduction of holiday accommodation at Raven Hill Farm. The Authority is objecting to the scale, design and siting of the proposed accommodation and the resultant harm that would have on the surrounding landscape and setting of the adjacent listed buildings.

It is officer opinion that small number of units of smaller scale, such as pods or shepherd's huts, in a well screened and unobtrusive location within the site, could be acceptable.

Scale, design and siting

Policy UE2 states that in order that development can be supported, the scheme must not detract from the character, tranquillity or visual attractiveness of the area and that the proposed cabins must be sympathetically designed to complement the site and its surroundings. The development site is a traditional farmstead, reflective of the typical agricultural holdings found across the National Park. There are a number of large modern agricultural buildings on site and whilst not attractive, they were functional in purpose and design and are not an uncommon feature on such a site.

Given that agricultural activities have largely ceased on site, following the 2004 conversions, it is proposed that one of the large timber clad agricultural buildings is to be demolished to clear the site of the proposed cabins. The proposed cabins are considered to be of considerable scale. The two larger cabins are approximately 8.5m long, 7.4m wide and measure 4.4m to the ridge; these units provide two en suite bedrooms with a large kitchen and living area. The smaller cabin is approximately 7.6m long, 6.1m wide and measures 4.3m to the ridge; this unit provides one bedroom and a spacious kitchen and living area. The supporting text of Policy UE2 explains that cabins are expected to be of a high-quality design and of lightweight construction; it is not considered that, due to the sheer scale of the individual units, the proposed cabins are of lightweight construction or temporary in nature. It was explained to the applicant, both during pre-application advice and throughout the application process, that smaller, more temporary looking units would be more acceptable (i.e. camping pods and shepherd's huts). The proposed cabins are significant in scale and would appear dominating in the context of the adjacent traditional, narrow, linear listed former agricultural buildings.

The Authority's Building Conservation Officer objected to the scheme stating that the cabins have a permanent nature and design within the landscape and are not typical in a rural farm setting. It is considered that the development would damage the setting of the listed building, by introducing structures of non-agricultural nature and appearance close to the listed farm buildings. The scheme is objected to as less than substantial harm to the setting of the listed building. The applicants are advised to work with the character of the listed building and design a more sympathetic scheme which enhances the setting and vernacular features of the listed building, rather than drawing attention away from it.

The design of the proposed cabins is particularly modern with timber clad walls, sheet metal roof and large glazed openings. It is not considered that the design of cabin, together with the associated decked areas and glazed balustrading, would complement or be sympathetic to the surrounding buildings or character of the wider area.

Conclusion

It is considered that the proposed development, by reason of the scale of the proposed units, together with their design and prominent position, would appear incongruous within the surrounding traditional agricultural setting. In view of the above, the development fails to meet the requirements of the Authority's adopted policies, as set out within the Local Plan, and as such, the application is recommended for refusal.

Public Sector Equality Duty imposed by section 149 of the Equality Act 2010

The proposal is not considered to unduly affect any people with protected characteristics.

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

Negotiations have taken place with the aim of making changes to ensure the proposal complies with the relevant policies of the Development Plan/delivers a sustainable form of development as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, though unfortunately such changes were not implemented/accepted.