

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Friday 2 February 2024

- Present: Mr A Cooper, Mr W Dracup, Mr P Harper, Mrs G Hill,
Mrs S Morgan, Mrs C Mott, Mr M Owen,
Mr G Pannell, Mr P Sanders, Mr P Smerdon, Mr M Williams,
Mr J Nutley, Mr M Renders, Mr M Jeffery
- Officers: Mr D Kinsella, Director of Spatial Planning
Mr J Aven, Deputy Head of Development Management
Mr O Dorrell, Senior Planning Officer
- Apologies: Mr D Thomas, Mr J McInnes, Mrs L Samuel, Ms P Woods,
Mr G Gribble (joined the meeting late)

The Chairman welcomed Mrs Shewin, the Authority's Independent Person. It was confirmed that the Meeting was quorate.

1565 Declarations of Interest and Contact

Members agreed to declare those interests set out in the matrix attached to the Agenda (Membership of other Council).

Mr Smerdon and Mr Pannell declared an interest and will leave the Meeting Room.

Mr Dracup had previously received a call from Mr Cole, but will remain in the Meeting.

1566 Minutes of the meeting held on 5 January 2024

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 January 2024 were AGREED and signed as a true record.

1567 Items requiring urgent attention

None.

1568 Applications for determination by the Committee

Mr Smerdon and Mr Pannell left the Meeting Room

Members received the report of the Senior Planning Officer (NP/DM/24/002).

Application – 0487/23 – Broomhill Farm, Harford, Ivybridge PL21 0JG

Speaker: Mrs Anne Wilcox, Parish Councillor, Harford
Speaker: Mr William Cole, son of the applicant and potential future resident of Torlands Barn.

Mr Dorrell (Planning Officer) presented the application.

The Planning Officer confirmed that additional public comments had been received since the committee reports were published and currently have six representations in support of the proposal and one in objection.

The application concerns the conversion of an existing barn, Torlands Barn, combined with the reconstruction and conversion of an adjacent shippon barn for use as a live/work unit. The barns are located in open countryside between Harford and Ivybridge and are accessed via an existing farm track.

The application was proposed through the Farm Diversification route and is a resubmission of Application No. 004/0023, which related to Torlands Barn only and was refused for reasons similar to those set out in the report today.

The application forms part of a farm diversification scheme for Broomhill Farm. Relevant areas were pointed out to the Meeting on a map. Members were shown photos of the barns which included pictures of the access from the road and from the field, which was a mud track and unsurfaced. Since the photos were taken (and the previous application), this has been laid with crushed stone. These changes can be seen on aerial images over the period of the last 4 years.

Members were shown more images of the two barns and attention was drawn to the open nature of the site; no division between the buildings and the adjacent fields. Images of the interior of Torlands Barn show no internal walls and deteriorating flooring. It is proposed to convert this building into a 2-bedroom dwelling. The shippon barn was described as a ruin with the roof and one wall missing. It is proposed to convert this building into an office and domestic storage area.

Photos were also shown to the Meeting of the stone which make up the walls and the relationship between the two barns as well as plans of the proposed buildings which include vehicular access, parking/turning area, patio area, solar panels and parking areas.

It was confirmed that no new doors or windows are proposed to the Torlands Barn with existing apertures being used and timber framed. Current metal roof to be replaced by natural slate. The ground floor to consist of kitchen, dining room and living room, with two bedrooms located on the mezzanine first floor.

The renovation of the shippon barn include the rebuild of walls which have previously fallen (using existing stone) and a new roof structure in slate. New doors and windows in timber frames and timber shutters. Solar panels are proposed.

The officer drew the Members' attention to a small adjustment to the wording in Refusal Reason 1. Addition of the words "of the barn shippon" in the first line to read "The proposed change of use of the barn shippon, by reason of the introduction..." This confirms that it is the renovation of both barns which contributes to the detrimental appearance, character, setting, local distinctiveness of the National Park, in particular the medieval field systems and the tranquillity of the immediate area.

The Planning officer set out that the proposed development would see significant works to Torland Barn including entire roof replacement and a complete reconstruction of the shippon barn which were considered to fall outside the definition of conversion. The renovation of the Shippon barn in conjunction with Torlands Barn would be contrary to Farm Diversification Policy 5.9 and Conservation of Historic Non-Residential Buildings in Open Countryside Strategic Policy 2.8.

The proposed conversion of Torlands Barn to a dwelling is a high impact use and while evidence has been submitted less harmful uses are not appropriate, this does not follow that planning permission should be granted for the proposed use.

The Planning Officer also set out the proposed works would likely have an impact on the local landscape character particularly the late medieval field system of Dartmoor's historic agricultural landscape. Introduction of a residential building where there has not been one before would be at odds with the established character locally and the proposed residential use would introduce a level of noise, activity and light spill which would be detrimental to the area.

Mrs Anne Wilcox, Farmer in Harford, Parish Clerk and Chair, introduced herself and went on to outline the characteristics of Harford, being a small community of less than 40 houses just north of Ivybridge with a population who are mainly over the age of 50. There is no affordable housing for younger inhabitants available. The proposed development lies 240 metres from her own house which shows it is not isolated and that there is quick and easy access to bus/train, schools (too close for bus provision), shops etc. in under 10 minutes' walk. The community want to try to retain younger members of the parish.

Mrs Wilcox then talked about the Dartmoor Local Plan which classifies the community as unsustainable. She quoted from the Local Plan which articulates innovation opportunity to achieve and maintain an environmental, social and economic balance. Mrs Wilcox raised the question to Members whether 'the commitment was just written in the plan or does this mean active involvement of the DNPA with communities and converting unsustainable to sustainable through real engagement.' It was stressed that this would be the first new house in the area since 1974 and would not impact the medieval field system or the Leat. It has the support of the parishioners and the nearest

neighbour. Less noise and light pollution than nearby farms and campsite. Social cohesion and public benefit. Planning consideration seems to have overlooked the scoring of the community benefit. Advocates for the addition that this residence cannot be sold separately from the farm. Mrs Wilcox suggested that Members would be welcome to a site visit.

The Chair wanted to check that Mrs Wilcox stated “the planning consideration appears to have overlooked the community benefit”. Strategic Policy 1.2 – need to be taken into account as to whether a proposed development is compliant.

Mr Gribble joined the Meeting.

A Member asked about the sale which Mrs Wilcox stated would not be independent of the farm. She went on to explain that the son of the current Farmer wished to rent the property.

It was replied that there is currently nobody on the housing needs register for the area as there is no list as such a small community.

Mr William Cole speaking on behalf of the applicant, his parents clarified they sought permission to restore and enhance the barns into a live/work unit, which was in response to pre app advice and previous refusal for planning permission. The development would promote sustainable living and diversification of income. The applicants were committed to sustainability with an off-grid energy system proposed and would comply with dark skies policy and enhance biodiversity and wildlife habitat.

Mr Cole confirmed that initially, it was intended to rent the property by himself but in the future will be available only to local residents at an affordable rent.

Mr Cole confirmed that they have tried to comply and foster open dialogue with the planning department. Mr Cole clarified that:

1. Regarding the detrimental impact on the area and medieval field system – DNPA Heritage officer / Case Officer did not visit however a Heritage Officer of wide respect was instructed on behalf of the applicant, who stated proposals will fit into long established patterns of landscape evolution and is beneficial to the landscape by preserving elements of the historic built environment associated with local farming by preservation/restoration of two existing barns. No change to field systems or farming practices.
2. Concern over domestic detailing means that revised plans now feature a two-bedroom mezzanine utilising existing apertures only. Restoration will maintain the barn’s integrity and historical essence and prevent further disintegration.
3. Isolated and rural location – contrary to this, Torlands Barn is well-connected and within walking distance to buses and railway station and facilities.

Unanimous support from the parish was also highlighted.

The Chair asked about the “pre-app” advice – Mr Coles stated this was with regard to the first application which was refused. It was also raised that Torlands Barn conversion had been improved regarding the existing apertures and the addition of the shippon barn.

Historically, there have been questions regarding planning development of the barns on the main farmstead which are currently used as farming buildings, and it was advised that they would not receive planning permission for change and are not suitable for conversion.

A Member asked about the shippon barn and how much it would look like the original barn. Mr Cole asked his older relatives about how the barn had looked before it had been partially demolished in an accident with a tractor. It was advised that it has always had a first floor. It was confirmed that the barn dates from between 1600 and 1730.

A Member asked about future use. Mr Cole would meet the criteria for a local person and would be at 80% of market rate. Although it was clarified that this has not been progressed with the applicants legal advisors in respect of this as yet, due to the recommendation being a refusal. Would not need to be at a lower rate, but Section 106 would ensure a local person to rent.

Mr Coles then confirmed that the stability of three walls remaining on the Shippon Barn had been tested.

A Member questioned the officers to clarify the Section 5.9 compared to an open market dwelling. The policy allows for greater flexibility than for a development of a traditional development, so would only be available for a local person. Therefore tied to a local person by a Section 106 agreement but not tied to the farmholding.

A motion was put forward by Mr Dracup and seconded by Mr Nutley and was agreed by a majority of members.

Seven in favour. Three against. Three abstained.

1569 Appointment of Site Inspection Panel and Arrangement for Site Visit on Friday 16 Feb

Request from the Director of Spatial Planning for Members to undertake a pre-Committee site inspection to familiarise themselves with the site and what is proposed, prior to the application going before Committee for determination:

Application 0432/23 – Yennadon Quarry - Extension of the working plan area of existing active quarry - Variation of Condition 2 of planning permission 0348/15, and consequential amendments to other conditions, to allow the continuation of approved operations to 3rd May 2042.

Application 0028/24 – Land at Lakehead Hill, Postbridge – Installation of Shared Rural Network telecommunications 35m lattice tower on concrete base with associated ancillary works.

To attend: Mr Owen, Mr Smerdon, Mr Williams, Mr Dracup, Mr Renders, Mr Nutley, Mrs Hill, Mr Sanders, Mr McInnes

Application 0487/23 – Broomhill Farm

To attend: Mr Dracup, Mr Renders, Mr Nutley, Mrs Hill, Mr Sanders, Mr McInnes

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