

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

HPK/2022/0313
Valid 04/08/2023

COLT CROFT FARM,
DUKES DRIVE, BUXTON,
DERBYSHIRE, SK17 9RP

RETROSPECTIVE
APPLICATION FOR THE
CHANGE OF USE OF SMALL
AREA OF LAND AT COLT
CROFT FARM FROM
GENERAL AGRICULTURAL
LAND TO MOTORHOME
STORAGE AREA (FULL -
MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Principle of Development
- Design Considerations
- Impact upon Residential Amenity
- Highway Safety/Impact on PROW
- Nutrient Neutrality

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site lies within the open countryside as defined by the Local Plan policies map. The application site relates to a small parcel of land which has a lawful use as agricultural land in association with Colt Croft Farm. The main farm buildings are located to the east of the site. To the immediate north is a caravan site. The site is accessed off a farm track which is also a Bridleway (known as HP4/25/2).

PROPOSAL

This is a retrospective planning application for the change of use of land from agricultural to motorhome storage. The site would be used for the storage of up to 12 motorhomes. The land is laid to hardcore. Access to the site would be via the existing track.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

High Peak Local Plan (Adopted 2016)

- S1 Sustainable Development Principles
- S1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- S4 Maintaining and Enhancing an Economic Base
- S7 Buxton Sub-area Strategy
- CF6 Accessibility and Transport
- EQ2 Landscape Character
- EQ3 Rural Development

- EQ6 Design and Place Making
- E1 New Employment Development
- E6 Promoting Peak District Tourism and Culture
- E7 Chalet Accommodation, Caravan and Campsite Developments

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

High Peak Design Guide (2018)

National Planning Policy Framework

Section 6: Building a strong competitive economy
Section 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities
Section 9: Promoting sustainable transport
Section 11: Making effective use of land
Section 12: Achieving Well-designed Places
Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

None

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 27/09/23
Neighbour consultation period ends: 14/09/23
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None received

Town / Parish Comments

None received

Peak and Northern Footpath Society

As it is retrospective, the storage is already in operation. When I walked the ROW to check how things stood, the gate shown on the plan was open. This gate is not necessary for either stock control (there are other gates to the fields) or for security>. It should therefore be removed to ensure that it does not add a potential unnecessary obstruction to the use of the path.

DCC Highways

There are no highway safety comments to make to the application

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

The application proposes the change of use of agricultural land to land for the storage of motorhomes. The application is retrospective and, at the time of the case officers site visit, the land was in use for such purposes.

Policy S1 seeks to support the local economy and businesses by providing for a range of economic development that provide employment opportunities suitable for local people in sustainable locations. Policy S7, which relates to the Buxton sub-area, encourages the growth of local employment opportunities and supporting the diversification and growth of the local economy, including the provision of additional visitor accommodation and facilities.

Policy EQ3 seeks to strictly control development in rural areas, while allowing for development which supports the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in sustainable locations and rural employment in the form of home working, commercial enterprises and live-work units where a rural location can be justified. EQ3 also supports complementary farm diversification that maintain the landscape quality and character of the countryside. Policy E1 supports business development in the countryside where it complies with Policy EQ3.

Policy E6 seeks to promote tourism development, by supporting tourism and provision for visitors which is appropriate to the countryside and consistent with environmental objectives.

The application relates to external motorhome storage. The site lies immediately adjacent to a caravan site and as such there is an established link between the proposed use and existing tourism activities within the area. Policy EQ3 supports development within the countryside which is related to tourism activities, through the delivery of associated facilities. Furthermore, EQ3 supports the appropriate diversification of agricultural land. Therefore, it is considered that the provision of such storage, at an existing farm site, would be appropriate in a rural location subject to the development not having an adverse effect on the landscape.

Therefore, the main considerations in this instance whether there would be a negative effect on the countryside, whether any amenity issues would arise, and whether there would be an impact upon highway safety or adjacent public right of way.

Design Considerations

Policy EQ 6 requires that all development should be well designed and be of high quality which responds positively to its environment while contributing to local distinctiveness and sense of place.

Policy EQ 2 seeks to protect, enhance and restore the landscape character and resist development which would have a negative effect. Policy EQ3 also seeks to

protect the landscape's intrinsic character and distinctiveness, and support development that maintains landscape quality.

The proposal seeks to change the use of land for motorhome storage. The motorhomes are to be sited on a hardcore base. The works and use have commenced. Aerial photography suggests that through time this land has changed in character including the partial laying of hardstanding which is first visible in 2018. After that date, the extent of hardstanding increased at some point before April 2021.

The proposals result in an encroachment of activities and built form at the site. However, the site is well related to the existing farm buildings to the east and the caravan site to the north. To the south is an existing farm track. Therefore, the site is well contained by existing uses and development. The site is viewed in the context of these surroundings which limits the effect that the use of land has on the overall wider landscape.

It is acknowledged that a public bridleway passes the site immediately to the south. Prior to the change of use occurring the users experience would have been that of farming activities and the caravan site. It is not considered, therefore, that the tranquillity and users experience of the area would have been adversely affected by the change of use.

Caravans are an established feature and characteristic of this part of the countryside, and as such the introduction of more on the parcel of land adjacent to the caravan site would not introduce a prominent or incongruous form of development to the area.

For the above reasons, the proposed change of use of land to storage use is acceptable and would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the area.

Amenity

Policy EQ6 requires development achieve a satisfactory relationship to adjacent development and not cause unacceptable effects by reason of visual intrusion, overlooking, shadowing, overbearing effect, noise, light pollution or other adverse impacts on local character and amenity.

The proximity of the development from residential development is such that there would be no negative effect on permanent dwellings. The site does lie adjacent to a caravan site where there would be an expectation to preserve the quality and enjoyment of the countryside. Notwithstanding this, the scale and nature of the development is such that any noise and disturbance is likely to be limited. No adverse effects on amenity are therefore anticipated.

Highway Safety/Impact on PROW

The proposal would be accessed via the existing farm track and caravan site access from Dukes Drive. The uplift in vehicular movements arising from the proposed development is likely to be limited. DCC Highways have raised no concern with

regard to the proposals and as such the effect on highway safety is likely to be acceptable.

Immediately adjacent to the site is a Public Right of Way (HP4/25/2) which is a public bridleway. The proposed change of use does not affect the route of the PROW. There is an existing field gate to the west of the site to ensure that stock are retained in the field. Whilst it is noted that the footpath society consider this to be unnecessary, given that it is openable and a stile is provided as well it is not considered that the use of the PROW is impeded by the development.

It would be necessary to include an informative on any permission to ensure that the developer is aware that the PROW remains unobstructed through development.

Nutrient Neutrality

The site lies within the catchment of the River Wye which forms the Peak District Dales Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The Council has been notified that action must be taken to address exceedances of phosphorus in the River. As such, the Council cannot grant consent for development unless it can rule out “likely significant effects” on the SAC. A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) will be required when the plan or project creates a source of water pollution or has an impact on water quality and when it is within the catchment of the SAC. Initially, a screening assessment will be required to consider if “likely significant effects” (alone or in-combination) on the SAC can be ruled out. If not, this will be followed by an “Appropriate Assessment” where the impact of the plan or project is considered in detail.

Screening Assessment

The proposal is not directly connected with or necessary for the conservation management of a European site. The proposal will not increase overnight stays or surface water run-off from the site. Therefore it will not risk having a significant negative effect on the SAC either on its own or in combination with other proposals and therefore it is not necessary to carry out an Appropriate Assessment.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

It is considered that the proposals would comply with the policies contained within the Development Plan and guidance within the NPPF, and as such it is recommended that the application be approved.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : APPROVE

Case Officer: Declan Cleary

Recommendation Date: 25/09/2023

X *B.S. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of High Peak Borough Council