

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

HPK/2025/0376
Valid 28/07/2025

OLD DANE HEY , LANE END
COMBS , CHAPEL-EN-LE-
FRITH , DERBYSHIRE ,
SK23 9UT

PROPOSED CONVERSION OF
DISUSED BUILDING TO SELF-
BUILD DWELLING

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- The principle of the proposal
- The impact on the character and appearance of the area
- The impact on residential amenity
- The impact on highway safety and accessibility
- The impact on the ecological value of the site

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site comprises a disused, redundant rural building located at Old Dane Hey, Lane End, within the rural area of Combs, near Chapel-en-le-Frith. The site lies outside the defined settlement boundary as identified in the High Peak Local Plan and is characterised by a rural setting with dispersed development, agricultural land, and traditional buildings.

The building is no longer in active use and is considered to be a permanent structure capable of conversion. Access to the site is taken from Combs Lane, an existing lane, which serves a number of properties in the locality and connects onto the Manchester Road (B5470) to the north and the village of Combs to the south.

PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought for the conversion of the existing disused building to form a single self-build dwelling. The proposal would involve the internal adaptation of the existing structure; repair and enhancement to existing stonework and roof; installation of traditional timber windows and doors; provision of a modest domestic curtilage; formation of on-site parking and use of the existing vehicular access onto Lane End.

The walls are intact, with some of the roof missing. No substantial extensions are proposed, and the development remains within the footprint of the existing building.

This application seeks the erection of 1 no. self-build 3-bedroom residential dwelling (Use Class C3) in the form of a two storey dwelling, private lawned garden and parking area.

Vehicular access/parking (2 spaces) to the site will be taken directly off Lane End which joins Combs Road.

The proposed dwelling would be 2-storeys, the existing walls are gritstone, and these walls will be repaired and enhanced to support new roofing finished in natural slate. New painted timber windows and doors will be installed.

The proposed fenestration will respect the existing openings, reinstating old, minimising new openings and installing roof lights where necessary.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

High Peak Local Plan (2016)

S1 – Sustainable Development Principles
S2 – Settlement Hierarchy
H1 – Location of Housing Development
EQ2 – Landscape Character
EQ3 – Rural Development
EQ5 – Biodiversity
EQ6 – Design and Place Making
CF6 – Accessibility and Transport

National Planning Policy Framework

Sections 5 (Delivering a sufficient supply of homes), 12 (Achieving well-designed places) and 15 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment)

Chapel-en-le-Frith Neighbourhood plan

Policy C1: Local Green Spaces

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

HPK/0003/6714 Restoration of existing building to two bedroomed dwelling –
Refused - T/APP/H1033/A/98/294504/P8 Appeal

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 20/11/2025
Neighbour consultation period ends: 30/12/2025

A summary of responses received in relation to the application are included below. All responses received are available to view in full on the electronic case file via the Council's website.

Public Comments

Two neutral representations received from neighbours stating the following:

- The lane must not be blocked by parked vehicles; neighbours need clear access along the lane to their properties.
- Provision of barn owl and bat boxes are welcomed.

- Once converted the dwelling should remain a dwelling occupied by the applicant, and not let out as a holiday home
- The building is in an area designated LGS6 Local Green Space, all works proposed should be what is strictly necessary for the conversion and not impact or encroach on the LGS.
- Concern that trees on the neighbouring property should be considered.
- Foul Sewage Package Treatment Plant proposed – permission will be required to drain into the stream owned by the neighbour, and they will require details of any pipework/excavations.
- Details of any outlet to the proposed sewage treatment package are requested.
- Suggested name of landowner given.
- Note that the proposed conversion will be contained within the building's existing shell and footprint, and that the external appearance will be close to that of the original barn.
- Neighbour does believe that the development will have an impact on them as neighbour and to the area - There has been no occupation of the building for many years, there are no services to the building so there has been no activity (domestic activity around the building, lights on at night, visitors, domestic paraphernalia etc.), other than very occasional agricultural activity.
- Neighbour seeks assurance that existing copper telephone cable connecting their property, mains electricity and water supplies to their property, will not be affected by the proposed connections or alteration required by this development

Town / Parish Comments

Proposal considered – no comments

Canal & Rivers Trust

No comment to make

Footpath Society

A public right of way runs along the edge of the planned development area, and a condition is requested that the path remain open and safe during and after any works

Conservation Officer

The building is not considered to be a heritage asset, no comment to make

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust

No comments received

Severn Trent Water Ltd

Site is out of STW area for sewerage

Derbyshire County Council Highways

Refuse. The application would present significant barriers in prioritising sustainable transport modes and does not give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements contrary to paragraphs 115 and 117 of the NPPF. The application would also be contrary to policies S1 and CF6 in HPBC's Local Plan.

OFFICER COMMENTS

The Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

The National Planning Policy Framework (2025) constitutes guidance for local planning authorities and decision-makers both in drawing up plans and as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The starting point for decision making as set out in law is the adopted development plan for the area. The development plan comprises the Cahplke-en-le-Frith Neighbourhood Plan and the High Peak Local Plan, which outline detailed and land allocations which support the strategic objectives for the Borough.

Paragraphs 10 and 11 of the NPPF advise that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that development in accordance with the development plan should be granted without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

It is necessary to consider the relevant issues and any material considerations before making a recommendation as to whether the proposal should be granted permission or refused.

Principle of Development

The main issue is whether the site is a suitable location for the proposed development with respect to local and national policies, and whether there are any material considerations sufficient to outweigh any harm identified.

The 2015 Act, and as amended in 2016, provides a robust legislative structure that imposes important duties on LPAs in providing SBCH which, over the past decade, has become an increasingly prominent and much talked about part of the planning system. The Government has consistently made clear the policy intention to make SBCH a mainstream option for home ownership.

There are a number of ways in which self-builders may undertake their build. They may choose to instruct a home building firm to carry out the works as a turnkey project; they may choose to work with a local builder, or they may wish to undertake the management of the build themselves including undertaking building works themselves if they have the relevant skills. The development of this site requires one of these build actions.

The site is located outside the settlement boundary in the open countryside (the site is not in Green Belt), where policy EQ3 allows for the conversion of existing permanent buildings in the countryside to residential use, provided that the proposal:

- Retains and enhances the building's character — especially if it is traditional or historic.
- Is structurally capable of conversion without major rebuilding.

- Supports rural economic activity, such as tourism, small businesses, or farm diversification.
- Avoids creating isolated new homes, unless the conversion meets national policy exceptions (e.g., heritage assets, high-quality design, or re-use of redundant buildings enhancing their setting).
- Protects the landscape, biodiversity, and the openness of the countryside.

The building is a traditional stone structure of permanent construction. The supporting statement indicates it is structurally capable of conversion without substantial rebuilding. Under Policy EQ3, such conversions are acceptable in principle, particularly where they secure the long-term future of a rural building and maintain landscape character.

Although the site is remote from services, the NPPF provides explicit support for re-using redundant rural buildings, recognising that such locations are inherently less sustainable in transport terms.

Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area

The conservation officer has considered the building and concluded it is not considered to be a heritage asset, nor is it within the setting of any heritage assets.

The surrounding area is rural in character, with development largely limited to traditional buildings and farmsteads. The site is within an area designated LGS6 Local Green Space, so all works proposed should be what is strictly necessary for the conversion and not impact or encroach on the LGS. Policies EQ2 and EQ3 require that development respects landscape character and local distinctiveness. Policy EQ3 supports the re use of redundant and disused building where it does not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the countryside. Where the existing building is in an isolated location the development should lead to an enhancement of the immediate setting.

The proposal retains the existing building form and scale, with only modest external alterations. As no significant extension or rebuilding is proposed and sympathetic building materials used (gritstone, slate and timber fenestration), the development would not appear intrusive or visually dominant. It is considered that the alterations proposed and contained curtilage with onsite parking area is not excessive and necessary for the conversion, respecting the LGS designation. The proposal is considered to enhance the immediate setting, and the conversion of a redundant rural building will preserve the character and appearance of the countryside, according with the objectives of Policies EQ2 and EQ3.

Impact on Local Green Space and Green Belt

The application site lies within Local Green Space designation LGS6 as identified in the Chapel-en-le-Frith Neighbourhood Plan. Policy C1 of the Neighbourhood Plan provides specific protection for such areas. The policy states:

“Development within a Local Green Space will not be permitted except in very special circumstances. Local Green Spaces will be protected in a manner consistent with the policy for Green Belts.”

National policy reinforces this position. Paragraph 108 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that:

“Local Green Space designation should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts.”

Consequently, although the site does not lie within designated Green Belt, development proposals within the Local Green Space must be assessed using Green Belt policy principles, particularly whether the proposal preserves openness and whether there are very special circumstances which clearly outweigh any harm.

In applying this approach, it is necessary to consider the nature of the proposed development and its effect on the openness and character of the Local Green Space.

The proposal involves the conversion of an existing permanent rural building within its existing footprint, with no significant extensions or enlargement proposed. The works consist primarily of repairing existing gritstone walls, reinstating a slate roof, installing timber windows and doors, and creating a modest residential curtilage with parking. The overall form, scale and massing of the building would therefore remain largely unchanged.

In Green Belt terms, national policy recognises that certain forms of development are not inappropriate, including the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction and the openness of the Green Belt is preserved. In this case the building is an established rural structure that already forms part of the landscape. The proposal would not materially increase the footprint, bulk or visual presence of built form within the Local Green Space.

Because the development does not materially affect openness, either spatially or visually, it is considered that the proposal would be consistent with the Green Belt–equivalent tests required by paragraph 108 of the NPPF. The development would not represent new encroachment into the Local Green Space but rather the re-use of an existing structure, securing its long-term maintenance and preventing further deterioration.

Furthermore, the proposed curtilage and parking area are modest and closely related to the existing building. They are considered to represent the minimum necessary domestic setting to facilitate the conversion and would not significantly erode the openness or character of the designated Local Green Space.

When assessed against Policy C1 of the Chapel-en-le-Frith Neighbourhood Plan and the Green Belt policy approach required by paragraph 108 of the NPPF, the proposal is considered acceptable. The development would preserve the openness and

character of the Local Green Space and therefore does not conflict with the policy objective of protecting these locally valued areas.

On this basis, the proposal is considered to accord with Policy C1 of the Neighbourhood Plan and the relevant provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Non-Designated Heritage Asset

Although the Council's Conservation Officer has advised that the building is not considered to be a heritage asset, it is reasonable to assess whether the structure may nevertheless constitute a non-designated heritage asset for the purposes of national planning policy.

The National Planning Policy Framework recognises that buildings, structures or sites that are not formally designated can still possess local historic or architectural significance. Paragraph 217 of the NPPF states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application.

The building subject to this proposal is a traditional rural gritstone structure located within an historic agricultural landscape near Combs. Buildings of this type are characteristic of the rural vernacular of the area surrounding Chapel-en-le-Frith and contribute to the historic character of the countryside. The use of traditional gritstone construction, together with the form and appearance of the building, reflects historic agricultural practices and the established built form typical of rural farmsteads in the High Peak area.

Although the structure is currently disused and partially derelict, its survival contributes to the historic landscape character, and it is therefore reasonable to conclude that it possesses local heritage value. On this basis, the building can reasonably be regarded as a non-designated heritage asset.

National policy makes clear that where development would affect a non-designated heritage asset, a balanced judgement is required having regard to the scale of any harm and the significance of the asset. In this case, the proposal would not result in harm to the significance of the building. Instead, the scheme seeks to retain and repair the existing structure, reinstate the roof, conserve the existing stone walls and reuse the building through sensitive conversion.

Without intervention, the building is likely to continue to deteriorate. The proposed conversion would therefore represent a positive heritage outcome, securing the long-term preservation of the structure and maintaining a traditional rural building within the landscape.

The proposal also respects the existing openings where possible, reinstates traditional materials including natural slate and painted timber windows, and avoids substantial extensions or alterations to the building's form. These measures ensure that the architectural character and historic appearance of the structure are conserved.

In this context, the proposal can be viewed as heritage-led regeneration, whereby the sensitive re-use of a traditional rural building both safeguards its historic fabric and enhances its setting.

The retention and repair of a non-designated heritage asset therefore weighs positively in the planning balance. This represents an additional material consideration supporting the proposal, particularly when combined with the benefits of re-using an existing building resource and delivering a single self-build dwelling.

When considered against the heritage policies of the National Planning Policy Framework, the proposal would preserve and secure the long-term future of a building that reasonably qualifies as a non-designated heritage asset, which weighs in favour of granting planning permission.

Access and Highway Safety

Access to the site is via an existing rural lane. Policy CF6 requires development to provide safe and suitable access without severe impacts on the highway network.

As the proposal involves the conversion of an existing building to a single dwelling, traffic generation would be limited. The level of vehicle movements associated with one dwelling is not considered to materially harm highway safety or the free flow of traffic.

The lane is narrow and unlit, and the site is remote from public transport. However, the proposal provides two onsite parking spaces to ensure that vehicles will pull off the lane and not block the lane, and the proposal is expected to generate modest traffic levels. Neighbours have expressed concern that building works may block the lane and have emphasised the necessity of future occupants to not to block the lane with parked vehicles, it is considered that the provision of onsite parking addresses this.

Subject to provision of onsite parking being provided prior to occupancy, the proposal is acceptable in highway terms.

Sustainability

The local highway authority objects to the application proposal due to "The application would present significant barriers in prioritising sustainable transport modes and does not give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements contrary to paragraphs 115 and 117 of the NPPF. The application would also be contrary to policies S1 and CF6 in HPBC's Local Plan." The consultation response focuses on sections of the guidance, rather than considering the whole - paragraph 115 makes it clear that the requirements of that paragraph should take account of the type of development and its location. In this case, this is a rural location, and the development proposes the reuse of an existing building and paragraph 84 (in relation to rural housing is therefore of direct relevance) states that isolated homes in the countryside should be avoided unless it reuses redundant buildings leading to an enhancement (84c). It also states that housing in the countryside should respond to

local need and circumstances (this will be a self-build dwelling for a local person) and can contribute to support the local economy.

The concept of sustainability argues in favour of concentrating most development in or adjoining existing built-up areas. However, there can be cases where some development in the countryside can be beneficial and sustainable. However this needs to be appropriate to the character of the countryside which also needs to be sustained.

This is not new build housing in the open countryside. It is the conversion of an existing redundant stone building.

The NPPF (paragraph 84), supports the reuse of redundant or disused buildings in rural areas for residential use, provided the building is of permanent and substantial construction, which this is.

The proposal provides a single self-build dwelling, supporting local housing choice and the Council's self-build obligations. The build will generate modest economic benefit for local construction and services.

The sustainability test for conversion of an existing building is not the same as for a new isolated dwelling.

While the location is not sustainable in transport terms, the NPPF acknowledges that conversions of existing rural buildings may be acceptable even where reliance on the private car is unavoidable.

Paragraphs 115 and 117 of the NPPF relate to promoting sustainable transport and giving priority to pedestrian and cycle movements. However the NPPF must be read as a whole. Paragraph 84 (rural housing) specifically recognises that:

- development in rural areas may rely more heavily on the private car, and
- that reuse of rural buildings is sustainable in land-use terms.

It is reasonable to conclude that while future occupiers would be reliant on the private car for most day-to-day trips, this is an inherent characteristic of rural living and not uncommon within the borough.

Crucially, this is a single dwelling. The transport impacts are limited to typical domestic vehicle movements; not materially different from other lawful rural dwellings and not of a scale that would result in severe cumulative impacts.

The NPPF is clear that development should only be prevented on highways grounds where the impact would be severe. There is no suggestion here of highway safety harm, inadequate visibility, or capacity issues. The objection raised by highways is based solely on sustainability/accessibility.

Whilst there are no footpaths leading from the site to the nearest bus stop on the Manchester Road (B5470) – Combs Road is not busy and the walking distance being 1100m (approx. 15 minutes) is considered an acceptable walking/cycling distance to connect residents to public transport.

Although, as highlighted by the LHA, the location is not fully sustainable in accessibility terms - the re-use of an existing rural building is explicitly supported by the NPPF, and the harm does not outweigh the benefits. The development is considered acceptable in the rural sustainability context.

Amenity

There are limited neighbouring residential properties in the vicinity. Development does not result in unacceptable impacts on amenity through overlooking, overbearing impact, noise, or disturbance. A neighbour has commented that the change from a redundant building to one occupied for residential purposes will impact them, as currently they have no light or activity associated or originating from the building.

Given the nature of the site and the modest scale of the conversion, the proposal should not give rise to significant harm to the living conditions of nearest neighbours located approx. 70 metres away. Whilst it is agreed that the use of the building inevitably changes from a redundant building, not used, to a single dwelling - the new use is unlikely to generate levels of activity that directly adversely impact the neighbours enjoyment of their dwelling.

BNG/ Impact on Ecological Value

The Environment Act (2021) places a legal requirement on all applications unless otherwise exempt to deliver a 10% uplift in Biodiversity Net Gain on site or, where this cannot be achieved, off-site which can include purchasing credits from a registered Habitat Bank. One of the limited number of exemptions include dwellings that meet the definition of 'Self Build' under Section 1 of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015.

The applicant intends to occupy the dwelling thereby meeting the definition under Section 1 of the 'Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015'. Subject to compliance with a restrictive occupancy condition, the application is not required to provide a 10% uplift in BNG either on or off site.

The applicant proposes the provision of barn owl and bat boxes on site, and these are welcomed.

Drainage

Foul drainage disposal via a contained Foul Sewage Package Treatment Plant is acceptable in principle, details of that and surface water management strategy requires submission by condition for approval.

Concerns were raised by the neighbour with regards to Foul Sewage Package Treatment Plant proposed – the issue of permission that may be required to drain into the stream owned by the neighbour is a civil matter. Should this be the drainage strategy option, details of pipework/excavations have been requested, and will have to be approved by the neighbour if it discharges onto their land or watercourse.

Notwithstanding there remains a requirement for a drainage (foul/surface water disposal) strategy for approval, a condition will require submission of details to be approved prior to development commencing.

Design

The site plan outlines that the proposed boundary treatments would involve a 600mm stone boundary wall to the front, sides and rear of the site. The public right of way will be retained and kept clear.

Two parking spaces will be located on land adjacent to the public right of way, which original stood an outbuilding (now demolished and currently housing the storage container for use during the build). The parking area will measure 6m x 6m and be surfaced in gravel.

The proposal retains the existing building form and scale, with only modest external alterations. As no significant extension or rebuilding is proposed and sympathetic building materials used (gritstone, slate and timber fenestration), the development would not appear intrusive or visually dominant. It is considered that the alterations proposed and contained curtilage, with onsite parking area that is not excessive and necessary for the conversion, accords with policy.

The Council considered the design and appearance of the new build proposal to be acceptable and that the scale and form of the building was not inappropriate or unsuitable.

Other issues

Impact on trees within the neighbours site was raised in a representation received. The separation distance from the development site to the neighbouring land is significant and the build will not occur close to any trees to threaten their viability.

In order to protect neighbour amenity and retain the dwelling as a residential family size dwelling, it will be conditioned that once converted the dwelling should remain a dwelling occupied by the applicant and not let out as a holiday home.

It is noted that the neighbour seeks assurance that existing copper telephone cable connecting their property, mains electricity and water supplies to their property, will not be affected by the proposed connections or alteration required by this development. This has been forwarded to the applicant, but remains a matter which lies beyond the planning system to address.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The proposal represents the conversion of an existing disused rural building to a self-build dwelling. The principle of development is acceptable under the High Peak Local Plan, subject to compliance with detailed policy requirements. The scheme would preserve the character and appearance of the countryside, would not harm residential amenity, would not adversely affect highway safety, and can be appropriately control site drainage.

The proposal is a self-build, and the applicant (Mrs Lucy Bradshaw) wishes to occupy the dwelling. According to the Self Build Register data for High Peak, the council is not meeting its legal duty to provide enough self-build plots to match the demand recorded on its register. This is significant in the planning balance.

The NPPF (paragraph 84), supports the reuse of redundant or disused buildings in rural areas for residential use, provided the building is of permanent and substantial construction.

The positive benefits include that the proposal re-uses an existing building resource, and it provides a single self-build dwelling, supporting local housing choice and the Council's self-build obligations. The build will generate modest economic benefit for local construction and services.

The sustainability test for conversion of an existing building is not the same as for a new isolated dwelling. It is also noted that the Council cannot currently demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing land. Whilst the provision of one dwelling will do little to improve this situation, for the above reasons it is considered that the development, is an appropriate location for the proposed development, would secure the long-term future of a building that reasonably qualifies as a non-designated heritage asset and without any detriment to the visual character of the landscape. Therefore the application should be approved.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: Approve

Case Officer: Pet Twigg

Recommendation Date: 11.03.2026

X 

Signed by: Jane Colley Signature

On behalf of High Peak Borough Council