

DRAUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

The Pines
Draughton
Skipton
BD23 6DU
15 May 2020

Development Control Services
Craven District Council
Attn: Mr J Parkinson

Dear Sirs

Application Ref. 2020/21594/FUL – Proposed replacement dwelling at East Berwick Farm

Thank you for consulting us on the above planning application.

We object to this application for the reasons set out below. Our objections are submitted with reference to the revised planning framework and the adopted policies in Craven's Local Plan 2012-32.

The Council would also provide additional comments related to the application, and these are listed separately below the detailed objections.

Background

The proposed development site, a traditional farmstead with associated outbuildings, sits in open countryside, close to Chelker Reservoir, and near to the neighbouring farmstead of West Berwick. East Berwick Barn, a neighbouring property to the farmhouse, is now a separate residential dwelling developed from an original outbuilding belonging to the farm. East Berwick House is the only other nearby property.

The site is accessible from the A65 and is an integral feature in the local landscape. It is clearly visible from the triangulation station at Haw Pike, from many of the well-used public rights of way in the area, from Bolton Abbey heritage site, and from the Yorkshire Dales National Park. As evidenced by landscape assessments previously prepared for the planning authority, the local landscape is of special quality and is characterised by stone-built properties and dry-stone walls. The farmstead contributes significantly to the character of this landscape and to the quality of the local views, as valued by residents and visiting walkers.

Objections

The Parish Council's objections are as follows:

1. New build in open countryside – objection to proposals to demolish and rebuild the property.

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The development site is located within Draughton parish, which is a Tier 5 settlement area, as defined in the Local Plan.

Local Plan policy SP4 provides that land outside the built-up area of a Tier 5 settlement is defined as open countryside.

With complete demolition of the original farmstead involved as a first step in the plans, the proposed development amounts to the construction of a new dwelling. New residential building in open countryside is only to be supported under the Plan's policies and spatial strategy, if it is essential for a rural worker, if it improves the environment or if it is of exceptional quality. There is no evidence submitted with this application which would indicate that these criteria are satisfied. A further criterion in policy SP4 would allow new residential build in the countryside if the development re-uses redundant buildings and enhances the immediate setting. This new build proposal subsumes 2 existing farm buildings, which are not currently in use as such, but does not do so in a way which enhances the immediate setting. In that the new modern build would replace the traditional layout of the original Dales farmstead, it would instead actively detract from the character of both the immediate and the wider setting.

Where the Local Plan does aim to support limited development in open countryside, this is on small sites which respect the rural nature of the Plan area and the number of farm dwellings, are residential conversions of disused rural buildings, or are rural affordable housing schemes and small self-build projects. The current development proposals do not align with any of these aims, as the project is designed as a complete rebuild, rather than as a conversion project involving buildings which are currently disused.

Furthermore, developing in open countryside on this site is not justified within the NPPF guidance (which, as revised in 2019, gives greater weight to the protection of the environment and landscape). The development would not benefit the rural economy locally in any material sense, it is not essential to its needs (where none have been identified), nor is it justified by special economic, environmental and/or social circumstances.

2. Inappropriate development in local setting - this development, introducing a new modern build, would be inappropriate and out of keeping with the surrounding setting, and would therefore contravene Local Plan policies. This modern build, however constructed in terms of the quality of its materials, would not replace the layout of the original farmstead and outbuildings and does not therefore conserve or enhance the character of the local landscape (PO3), nor does it represent an opportunity to restore or enhance the countryside and landscape (ENV1). It is also out of keeping with the local setting in terms of its scale. The proposed elevation of the new build would be markedly higher than the original and the new roof-line would be visible over a wider area. This would be obtrusive in the landscape and detract from its character.

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For these reasons, the Parish Council would recommend that the applicant be invited to reconsider their proposals and bring forward alternative plans for a sympathetic restoration of the original farmhouse, coupled with plans to refurbish and develop such of the disused outbuildings as may be appropriate. The applicant's plans are currently submitted on the basis of only one surveyor's views, and alternative advice should be sought from specialists involved in working with heritage buildings, in order to assess the farm's suitability for works aimed at retention and renovation of original structures and features. The Council's Clerk, who serves also as clerk to Addingham parish council, is well-aware of the importance of seeking out such alternative advice when faced with recommendations for demolish and rebuild from a non-specialist adviser. (A heritage building in Addingham was successfully restored last year, in spite of initial advice to demolish it, using sympathetic materials and processes, including restoration of the roof, replacement of windows and fitting of modern insulation, rebuilding of foundations, and, crucially, the pinning of the walls, which, like East Berwick Farm, were constructed of random rubble stonework.)

Given the positioning of the site in the context of local landscape views, the Council would also recommend that comments on the proposed development should be sought from Historic England in order to ensure that the significance of the character of the original traditional Dales farmstead within the local setting be fully taken into account.

3. Local landscape and views – as an inappropriate and unnecessary rebuild of a traditional farmstead, this development does not respect the local landscape and views.

Craven's Landscape Appraisal 2002 (which forms part of the local planning framework) categorises Draughton as a landscape zone within the Craven uplands: '*A complex upland fringe landscape on the edge of the Pennines*'..... The study identified four local landscapes, comprising: '7a Draughton...' Draughton is thus included in the overall assessment of this type of landscape area which is *of sufficient high landscape quality to be designated as Special Landscape Area*.

The East Berwick site is within this area and is of identified landscape quality in the Local Plan. As such, it is protected under the policies in Craven's adopted Local Plan (ENV1 and PO3). As detailed in paragraph 2 above, the proposed development would not enhance or improve the landscape and thus conflicts with these policies.

The NPPF, as revised in 2019, also includes policies to protect local landscapes. It continues to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and Section 15 para.170 requires the planning authority to protect it:

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Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
protecting and enhancing valued landscapes....in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan

In this regard, the Parish Council would recommend that a landscape assessment report be prepared as part of the consideration of this application, in order that its impact on the local landscape and local views should be properly assessed and taken into account.

Comments

In addition to the objections detailed above, the Parish Council would draw the following comments to the attention of officers of the planning authority:

1. Consultation

The list of consultees associated with the application appears not to be complete. It does not include the Estate of the Duke of Devonshire, which is a significant neighbouring landowner, nor does it include the Ramblers Association, who should be consulted as regards the proposed footpath diversion.

As the site is visible from the National Park, the Council would also suggest that it would be crucial to seek the views of the YDNP authority, and of the Friends of the Dales (formerly the Yorkshire Dales Society). The Council would recommend that the consultation process be widened to include all these additional bodies, as well as Historic England, as noted above.

2. Diversion of footpath

The Parish Council welcomes initiatives to clarify and re-establish local footpaths. The original footpath on this site, which, according to the applicants' submitted documents, passed across the front of East Berwick Farm, seems to have been stopped up some years ago by previous owners. The right of way for walkers has been unclear for some time, and custom and practice has led to the development of an alternative route to pass along the access lane beside East Berwick Farm and East Berwick Barn.

The local PROWs in this area need to be properly clarified and clearly way-marked, with accessible stiles provided as necessary.

The Council recommends that the planning authority invite NYCC footpaths officers to look into this as a high priority, regardless of the timing for consideration of this particular planning application.

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Recommendations

The Parish Council recommends that all comments put forward in this letter, both those included within the objections and those listed separately, be followed up by officers of the planning authority in investigating this planning application for decision, but that, as it stands, the application be refused on the grounds that it contravenes local and national planning policies.

Yours faithfully

Jane Markham
Clerk to the Council

Copies: Cty Cllr R Heseltine, District Cllr D Pighills

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