

13. FULL APPLICATION - ERECTION OF A CROATION-STYLE DRY STONE SHELTER, PARSLEY HAY CAR PARK, BIGGIN (NP/SM/0313/0195 P.6512 414746/363696 08/04/2013/AM)

APPLICANT: PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Committee have been requested to determine this application as it has been made by the National Park Authority.

Proposal

This application seeks planning permission for the erection of a building approximately 120m to the north west of the Parsley Hay Visitor Centre at the far end of the existing car park.

The submitted application shows that the proposed building would be a Croatian-style dry stone shelter called 'kažun' in Croatian. The submitted plans show that the building would be a single storey round structure under a cone shaped roof. The building would have a diameter of 5m and a maximum height of 4.7m. The walls of the building would be constructed from limestone and the roof would be clad with natural stone slates. The building would have a wooden door and two open slot windows.

The submitted application states that the building would be used as a shelter for users of the Tissington Trail and for educational and interpretive purposes complementing the existing facilities at Parsley Hay.

Site and Surroundings

The application site is located approximately 120m to the north west of the Parsley Hay Visitor Centre on part of the existing car park. The site is occupied by the National Park Authority and includes cycle hire facilities and amenities for users of the Tissington Trail.

The visitor centre is located in open countryside, approximately 3.5km to the north east of Hartington and 2.6km to the south west of Monyash. Access to the site is to the south of the main building and passes through the nearest neighbouring properties including a small group of houses and a telephone exchange. The Tissington Trail runs adjacent to the application site. The surrounding landscape character is defined as Limestone Plateau Pastures within the Authority's Landscape Character Assessment.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the application be APPROVED subject to the following conditions or modifications.

- 1. Statutory time limit for implementation.**
- 2. Development not to be carried out otherwise than in accordance with specified approved plans.**
- 3. Limit use ancillary to visitor centre and retained within the same planning unit.**
- 4. Conditions to specify architectural and design details for the building, including stonework, roof materials and joinery details / finish.**

Key Issues

- Whether the proposed development is in accordance with the Authority's recreation, environmental education and interpretation policy and whether the proposal would

otherwise conserve the valued characteristics of the National Park, including its landscape, biodiversity and cultural heritage.

History

2004: NP/DDD/1004/1092: Planning permission granted conditionally for erection of visitor centre. This replaced the original building.

Consultations

The statutory consultation period has not expired at the time of writing. A verbal update of any consultation responses or representations will be given at the meeting.

Highway Authority – No objection.

District Council – No response received at time of writing.

Parish Council – No response received at time of writing.

Representations

No representations have been received at the time of writing.

Main Policies

Main Relevant Core Strategy (CS) policies: GSP3 and RT1

Relevant Local Plan (LP) policies: LC4

The development includes the erection of a new building on site which would be used as a shelter by users of the Tissington Trail and for education and interpretive purposes. Core Strategy policy RT1 is especially relevant to this application. RT1 states that proposals for recreation, environmental education and interpretation must conform to the following principles:

- A. The National Park Authority will support facilities which enable recreation, environmental education and interpretation, which encourage understanding and enjoyment of the National Park, and are appropriate to the National Park's valued characteristics. Opportunities for access by sustainable means will be encouraged.
- B. New provision must justify its location in relation to environmental capacity, scale and intensity of use or activity, and be informed by the Landscape Strategy. Where appropriate, development should be focused in or on the edge of settlements. In the open countryside, clear demonstration of need for such a location will be necessary.
- C. Wherever possible, development must reuse existing traditional buildings of historic or vernacular merit, and should enhance any appropriate existing facilities. Where this is not possible, the construction of new buildings may be acceptable.
- D. Development must not on its own, or cumulatively with other development and uses, prejudice or disadvantage peoples' enjoyment of other existing and appropriate recreation, environmental education or interpretation activities, including the informal quiet enjoyment of the National Park.

CS policy GSP3 and LP policy LC4 set out further criteria to assess the acceptability of all new development in the National Park.

The above policies in the Authority's Core Strategy and the Local Plan are also supported by a wider range of spatial planning policies and design and conservation policies in the Development plan, which are listed below (under wider policy context).

National Planning Policy Framework

In the National Park the development plan comprises the Authority's Core Strategy 2011 and saved policies in the Peak District National Park Local Plan 2001. Policies in the Development Plan provide a clear starting point consistent with the National Park's statutory purposes for the determination of this application. It is considered that in this case there is no significant conflict between prevailing policies in the Development Plan and more recent Government guidance in the NPPF with regard to the issues that are raised.

Wider Policy context

Relevant Core Strategy policies include: GSP1, GSP2, DS1, L1, L2 and L3

Relevant Local Plan policies include: LC16, LC17, LT18 and LT20

Assessment

The submitted application states that the proposed building is part of a series of events and features to mark Croatia's accession to the European Union later this year. The building has been gifted to the United Kingdom by the Croatian government and the National Park has been chosen as the location for the building because the Park's tradition of dry stone wall building in limestone, similar to that of the Croatian Istria, and the Park's links with rural activity in Europe, including Croatia.

The shelter would be built by Croatian expert dry stone wallers assisted by amateur wallers from the National Park. The finished building would be owned and occupied by the National Park Authority and in addition to being a shelter for users of the Tissington Trail, it would be used by the Authority for educational and interpretive purposes to complement the existing visitor centre. Specifically the building would be used to teach small groups of children and would house interpretive panels prepared by the Authority's Communications Team.

The Authority's adopted development strategy (CS DS1 C) in principle allows development for recreation, environmental education and interpretation in the open countryside. CS policy RT1 is specifically relevant and states that the Authority will support such proposals which encourage understanding and enjoyment of the National Park and are appropriate to the National Park's valued characteristics. The policy requires clear justification for a siting development in the open countryside and only allows the erection of new buildings where conversion of existing traditional buildings of historic or vernacular merit or re-use of existing facilities is not possible.

In this case the proposed use of the building has a clear functional link to the Tissington Trail and therefore there is a justification for the siting of this building in open countryside. The proposed building would encourage the understanding and enjoyment of the Tissington Trail and local building techniques and the connection with Croatia and other European Countries. In this case there are no existing traditional buildings which could be converted, and while shelter is already provided for walkers by the existing facilities, the proposed building would also provide additional facilities to complement those within the existing centre.

The proposed building would be sited adjacent to the trail at the far end of the existing car park. The building would not be sited adjacent to the existing visitor centre, but would be sited on the corner of the car park north of the building. However, because of the small scale of the building and the use of locally obtained natural materials the building would be read as part of the existing site and not as isolated or sporadic development in the open countryside.

The building would not have a harmful impact upon the wider landscape because of the scale of the structure and because it would be seen against a backdrop of mature trees and rising ground up to the A515.

Rather than being built to reflect the design of a traditional stone outbuilding, in this case the building is of Croatian design, with a circular form under a conical roof. The building would, however, be constructed using local building materials and would not appear incongruous or out-of-keeping with the existing building on site or its surroundings.

The proposed building would not appear to give rise to any highway safety or parking issues, and the Highways Authority has no objections to the proposal. The proposal would not interfere with or require diversion of the Tissington Trail. The proposal would not appear to affect any protected species, habitat, trees or give rise to any other nature conservation issues. The proposal would not have any obvious archaeological implications. The proposal would not harm the amenity of any neighbouring property or disadvantage people's enjoyment of existing activities or the quiet enjoyment of the National Park.

Conclusion

It is therefore concluded that the proposed development represents an appropriate facility which would enable recreation, environmental education and interpretation appropriate to the National Park's valued characteristics. The location of the proposed development is justified in relation to the likely capacity, scale and intensity of the proposed use and the need for the development to be located in the open countryside has been demonstrated in this case.

There are no existing traditional buildings that could be re-used and the proposed building would provide additional facilities to complement the existing visitor centre building. In these circumstances the erection of a new building is acceptable in principle. The proposed design is acceptable and the development would not have an adverse visual impact or harm the landscape character of the National Park or any other valued characteristic. Whilst it is an unusual design, this is considered to be an appropriate, low-key but permanent celebration of links between the Peak District and Croatian limestone landscapes.

The proposal would not harm the amenity of any neighbouring property or disadvantage people's enjoyment of existing activities or the quiet enjoyment of the National Park.

If permission is granted, planning conditions would be recommended to limit the use of the building, for it to remain ancillary and retained within the same planning unit as the existing visitor centre and to secure the development in accordance with the submitted plans along with specification of architectural and material details.

Subject to conditions and in the absence of further material considerations indicating otherwise, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with the development plan. Accordingly the proposal is recommended for conditional approval.

Human Rights

Any human rights issues have been considered and addressed in the preparation of this report.

List of Background Papers (not previously published)

Nil