

Paul Jackson

From: Paul Jackson
Sent: 07 April 2016 13:35
To: 'dm@ryedale.gov.uk'
Subject: 16/00338/FUL: Change of use of garden and erection of replacement storage building; Flowery Bank, Broughton

I have the following observations to make on this application:

- 1) The boundary of the Howardian Hills AONB follows the western hedge of Broughton Lane and the southern edge of the gardens of Flowery Bank, and Broughton Lane itself is a Public Bridleway that is heavily used as an access into the AONB. The Design & Access Statement makes no mention of the AONB and doesn't therefore make any assessment of the potential impact of the proposal on the setting of the AONB or people's enjoyment of it.
- 2) The application site consists of a residential garden and I feel that it is inappropriate to site what is in essence a substantial industrial-style building in such a setting so far away from the existing house/storage sheds. Although not a matter for comment in respect of the AONB, I would have thought that a building of the size proposed would have a considerable adverse impact on the amenity of the neighbouring gardens.
- 3) At present, users of Broughton Lane start to experience the 'open countryside' of the AONB once they reach the access track to the rear of Flowery Bank. On the east side the gardens are open greenspace and on the west side open countryside can be glimpsed through the substantial hedge. The proposed shed is located at the south of the garden, pushing it towards the AONB boundary, whilst the site itself is some 2m above the level of the bridleway. This will have the effect of making the building seem substantially taller, given the 4.2m height to the eaves plus the c.2m ground level difference.
- 4) Although the application only seems to relate to the change of use of the part of the garden underneath the proposed shed, it is unrealistic to think that the whole garden won't in effect become a site with business-related use. No access track is shown to the proposed shed, and it's not hard to see that a hardstanding/storage area won't develop to the north of the shed, in effect taking up the entire garden in due course.
- 5) Although the AONB Management Plan is supportive of infrastructure developments that enable the local agricultural industry to thrive, these need to conform with the Design Guidelines that have been developed and Adopted by the local planning authorities for use in the development management process. In this instance I feel that the development is poorly sited, with a relatively large building proposed for a prominent location. Given the potential adverse visual impact on the setting of the AONB unfortunately I must register an **Objection** to the proposal as currently framed.
- 6) The proposed building uses a sympathetic colour scheme and I believe that a new building on the area currently occupied by the buildings earmarked for demolition would (although potentially not the same size as the proposed building) make better use of the space available without impacting adversely on either the AONB or the streetscene.

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Paul Jackson

From: Paul Jackson
Sent: 19 April 2016 15:45
To: 'planning@hambleton.gov.uk'
Subject: 16/00628/FUL: Retrospective application for a timber barn

I have the following observations to make on this application:

- 1) The building is low in height, screened from the public road by tall hedges and uses materials of a sympathetic colour. I don't therefore have any concerns about any potential adverse visual impact on the AONB landscape.
- 2) From my site visit I noted that the barn that is the subject of this application wraps around another, earlier, barn building. This earlier barn isn't included in this application, nor does it appear from the plans to have been included in the Certificate of Lawfulness application (16/00471/CLE) for the other structures?
- 3) Irrespective of the result of this application, any unauthorised structures should be removed from the site following the conclusion of the planning application processes. The 'menage' is a grass paddock and hence no remedial action would be needed, but I noted that the static caravan was still present on the site.

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Paul Jackson

From: Paul Jackson
Sent: 19 April 2016 16:00
To: 'planning@hambleton.gov.uk'
Subject: 16/00639/FUL: Change of use from agriculture to mixed use; Sunley Woods Farm, Husthwaite

I have the following observations to make on this application:

1. The Howardian Hills AONB Management Plan supports agricultural diversification activities where these do not have adverse impacts on the Special Qualities of the AONB.
2. The yard area appears tidy and well-run, and the log cabins are dark-coloured and therefore relatively unobtrusive.
3. The static holiday homes are light in colour and these are the most noticeable features. I feel however that the proposed hedge will screen the site adequately, particularly given the height it is proposed to grow it to. The site is overlooked by users on the public bridleway on the top of Beacon Banks, but the views are long-distance and the proposed screening would mitigate any adverse impacts.
4. I would like the hedge mix to be more diverse than is currently proposed, to offer some additional biodiversity benefit. Given that the primary purpose is to act as a dense visual screen, the most appropriate other species that should be incorporated is blackthorn.

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Paul Jackson

From: dm@ryedale.gov.uk
Sent: 20 May 2016 12:24
To: Paul Jackson
Subject: Consultee Comments for Planning Application 16/00813/FUL

Mr Paul Jackson,

You have been sent this email because you or somebody else has submitted a consultee comment on a Planning Application to your local authority using your email address. A summary of your comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 12:22 PM on 20 May 2016 from paul.jackson@northyorks.gov.uk.

Application Summary

Reference: 16/00813/FUL

Address: Land West Of Greets House Road Welburn
Malton North Yorkshire

Proposal: Erection of a 12.5m high slim-line column to include 3no. antennas and 3no. RRUs together with installation of 2no. ground based equipment cabinets all within a compound formed from a 1.6m high timber post and rail fence.

Case Officer: Charlotte Cornforth

[Click for further information](#)

Comments Details

Comments: I have the following comments to make on this proposal: 1) The mast is relatively low in height and uses a monopole construction which should minimise its visibility. Painting the mast brown will reduce the visibility in the landscape. 2) I would however also like to see the three TEF antennae painted in a dark colour. Minimising visual intrusion by painting masts a sympathetic colour is often compromised by the white antennae. This should be technically possible as far as I'm aware, as the monopole mast on the northern edge of Sheriff Hutton village has green-painted antennae. Paul Jackson

Paul Jackson

From: dm@ryedale.gov.uk
Sent: 27 June 2016 13:04
To: Paul Jackson
Subject: Consultee Comments for Planning Application 16/00813/FUL

Mr Paul Jackson,

You have been sent this email because you or somebody else has submitted a consultee comment on a Planning Application to your local authority using your email address. A summary of your comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 1:01 PM on 27 Jun 2016 from paul.jackson@northyorks.gov.uk.

Application Summary

Reference: 16/00813/FUL
Address: Land West Of Greets House Road Welburn
Malton North Yorkshire
Proposal: Erection of a 12.5m high slim-line column to include 3no. antennas and 3no. RRUs together with installation of 2no. ground based equipment cabinets all within a compound formed from a 1.6m high timber post and rail fence.

Case Officer: Charlotte Cornforth

[Click for further information](#)

Comments Details

Comments: I have the following additional comments to make on this application: 1) The applicant has indicated that the antennae can be painted in a brown/green colour tone as specified by myself, and this addresses the issue raised in my previous response. 2) Given that the materials colours are now of a hue that would enable the mast to blend into the landscape, and that the mast will help to fill a dead-spot in mobile telecommunications coverage, I believe that the application meets Objective D7 of the current AONB Management Plan. 3) In coming to this view, and particularly with the agreement on materials colours, I have felt that the mast would not have an adverse visual impact on Castle Howard or it's parkland, which are both Listed and Registered respectively as Grade I. The mast is in the foreground of views from the A64 towards Castle Howard, which is the on-the-ground juxtaposition identified by Historic England's desk-based assessment, which led them to request the preparation of a Heritage Statement. Despite HE listing the heritage assets found within 2.5km of the

application site, the submitted Heritage Statement does not include the built structures at Castle Howard nor its parkland as Heritage Assets. The LPA will need to decide whether the submitted Heritage Statement fulfils the purpose required of it by Historic England's first response, or whether the omission of Castle Howard requires additional assessment work to be carried out. Paul Jackson

Paul Jackson

From: dm@ryedale.gov.uk
Sent: 10 June 2016 16:41
To: Paul Jackson
Subject: Consultee Comments for Planning Application 16/00900/HOUSE

Mr Paul Jackson,

You have been sent this email because you or somebody else has submitted a consultee comment on a Planning Application to your local authority using your email address. A summary of your comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 4:38 PM on 10 Jun 2016 from paul.jackson@northyorks.gov.uk.

Application Summary

Reference: 16/00900/HOUSE
Address: Fairfax House Mill Lane Ampleforth YO62 4EJ
Proposal: Erection of two storey extension to rear elevation, single storey extension to side elevation and detached two storey garage/workshop to include ancillary accommodation above together with installation of electric entrance gates following demolition of existing extension and outbuildings.

Case Officer: Charlotte Cornforth

[Click for further information](#)

Comments Details

Comments: I have the following observations to make on these proposals: 1) No objections to the demolition of the existing barns and sheds and erection of a granary-style garage block. 2) No objections to the alterations to the main house. The largely glazed gable wall of the rear extension faces away from the road and should not be prominent in views from local footpaths, provided that the current level of tree cover around the property is maintained at approximately the same level. 3) I have significant concerns however about the adverse visual impact of the proposed entrance gate and piers. The substantial brick piers (with presumably permanent lighting) would be an inappropriate and incongruous suburban feature in what is a relatively rural setting within the AONB. Watergate House on the direct opposite side of the road has managed to create a secure, intercom-controlled entrance which is much more discreet. Paul Jackson

Paul Jackson

From: Paul Jackson
Sent: 23 June 2016 15:35
To: 'planning@hambleton.gov.uk'
Subject: 16/01084/FUL: Construction of three bay field shelter, Westfield, Brandsby

I have the following observations to make in relation to this proposal:

1. The field shelter sits in a small field which I presume is within the applicant's ownership. Given that the building comprises of a barn and animal shelter, it would appear that it is of a substantial size in comparison to the agricultural land which it would service. It appears from the Parish Council response that the applicant rents other land in the vicinity. This does not however appear to be connected to the paddock in which the proposed building is sited, making its use as a shelter somewhat problematic if it is separated from the grazing land by the Village Hall car park.
2. I have significant concerns about the size of the building and its proximity to the Village Hall. Although not Listed, the Village Hall is a vernacular building of some age and might be considered to be an undesignated heritage asset. I don't feel that the proposed building would enhance either the Village Hall itself or its setting, which are easily viewed from both the Public Footpath that runs between the B1363 and the Village Hall, through the field to the south of the application site, and from the B1363 itself.
3. Should the Local Planning Authority be minded to approve the application, then the roof colour should be specified as a dark grey, approximating to BS4800 10A11 Charcoal Grey, rather than the light grey currently indicated on the plans.

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Paul Jackson

From: Paul Jackson
Sent: 08 July 2016 17:02
To: 'planning@hambleton.gov.uk'
Subject: 16/01305/FUL: Alterations & extensions, Cherry Trees, Yearsley

I have the following observations to make on this application:

1. The dwelling is modern and doesn't have any vernacular design features. The current front elevation has some awkward roof slopes, roof heights and dormer on its right hand half and would benefit from some tidying-up and coherence in design.
2. The area of glazing on the proposed single storey extension facing the road is substantial but not overpowering and hence I don't have any objection to that part of the scheme.
3. Creating a single main roof line by raising the roof on the eastern half of the house will help to create a better balance, whilst extending the western half of the front elevation with a single storey extension is also acceptable.
4. I do however feel that the central section of the front elevation is a mis-match of roof slopes, stepped wall and gutter lines and an awkward small dormer. To my mind this section is completely at odds with the design on either side and is a not-very-successful attempt to keep the small window yet at the same time extend forwards towards the road. The end result is a chaotic mix of stepped wall and gutter lines, with the small dormer also set back from the main one.
5. The re-modelling of this dwelling gives the opportunity to iron-out the design anomalies from the original house and create something more in keeping with the AONB, but still accepting that it's a modern house. The single storey extensions add significantly to its modern day purpose, but I don't believe that the central section of the front elevation will enhance the appearance of the dwelling and I feel that this should be amended to create a much less 'fussy' façade facing the road.

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Paul Jackson

From: Paul Jackson
Sent: 15 July 2016 17:50
To: 'planning@hambleton.gov.uk'
Subject: 16/01126/FUL: Alterations to outhouse and two storey extensions, Gardeners Cottage, Oulston

I have the following observations to make in relation to these proposals:

1. I have concerns regarding the size and scale of the proposed two-storey timber-clad extension, in comparison to the Listed Gardener's Cottage. The proposed extension is of a height and scale that is barely subservient to the main Listed dwelling and is therefore likely to overpower the setting of the Listed Building.
2. Contrary to the Agent's assertion, the proposed two storey extension will be seen from the road, footpath and property opposite. Simple use of a ruler between the corner of the Parish Room and the north west corner of Gardener's Cottage, and the corner of Gardener's Cottage/corner of proposed extension indicates that, at its greatest extent, approximately 50% of the extension will be visible from the road. The existing mature shrubs currently screen the views but they will be removed to accommodate the parking area.
3. The visibility of the extension through this 'window' from the road may be exacerbated by the timber-clad construction, which is not commonly seen in the Howardian Hills, thereby potentially making it more prominent.



Paul Jackson

From: Paul Jackson
Sent: 01 August 2016 12:01
To: 'planning@hambleton.gov.uk'
Subject: 16/01126/FUL: alterations & construction of extensions

Importance: High

I have the following comments to make on the revised plans pertaining to this application:

- 1) I welcome the reduction in height of the main extension from two storey to single storey, together with the stepped roof line. I feel that this will create an extension that is much better proportioned in relation to the existing Listed Building. As it is lower in height, any views from the main road through the access gate will be significantly less than with the original proposal.
- 2) Although vertical slit windows are not a vernacular feature, external views of them (if any) will be minimal. I also feel that they suit the overall design concept of the glass linking-atrium and timber-clad walls. The extensions will be clearly different from the original dwelling, without detracting or over-powering it, and I now feel that we have a high quality scheme that will complement the Listed Building and Conservation Area setting.

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Paul Jackson

From: dm@ryedale.gov.uk
Sent: 22 August 2016 16:49
To: Paul Jackson
Subject: Consultee Comments for Planning Application 16/01257/FUL

Mr Paul Jackson,

You have been sent this email because you or somebody else has submitted a consultee comment on a Planning Application to your local authority using your email address. A summary of your comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 4:45 PM on 22 Aug 2016 from paul.jackson@northyorks.gov.uk.

Application Summary

Reference: 16/01257/FUL

Address: Lodge Farm 1 Scackleton Lane Scackleton
YO62 4NA

Proposal: Erection of a 4 bedroom detached dwelling and attached double garage with additional domestic living space above, following the demolition of existing dwelling and associated outbuildings

Case Officer: Rachel Smith

[Click for further information](#)

Comments Details

I have the following observations to make on this proposal: 1) No objection to the principle of demolishing the existing house and erecting a replacement dwelling. 2) I do however have significant concerns about many of the design features of the proposed dwelling and how visible these would be once completed. The existing garden trees/shrubs and boundary hedges are overgrown and will be substantially cut back to let light in. This will also mean that the new house will be substantially more visible from adjacent public roads and Rights of Way than the current dwelling is. The Design & Access Statement quotes the Ryedale Rural Design Guide but the design then appears to ignore significant parts of it. The local vernacular style is for simple, rectangular houses, with smaller subservient extensions, either in-line or at right angles to the principal house. There are several good examples of new farmhouses in the AONB which have achieved the effect very successfully, the closest being the new dwelling at Newstead Farm. Unfortunately this design displays many features which are simply not found on houses within the

Howardian Hills. It has a complicated multi-rectangular footprint with numerous protuberances that create a real 'hotch-potch' of a design - bay window; ill-proportioned eastern 'extension'; full-height Hall window with asymmetric glazing bars; complicated 'extensions' on the western elevation linking to the garage. The multitude of external chimney stacks rising from side walls is also particularly incongruous - as the Rural Design Guide states, chimneys should emerge from the ridge of the roof. The design is so complicated that the two-storey northern 'mini-extension' for the Family Space/Bathroom appears to have been missed-off the North East Elevation drawing, as does the Dining Room bay window. The South West Elevation drawing amply demonstrates the multitude of clashing roof lines, ridge heights and mis-alignments, and that is without the afore-mentioned Family Space/Bathroom 'mini-extension' which again is not shown. Overall, I'm afraid that the design is more applicable to an upmarket suburban housing estate than an open-country location within a nationally designated landscape. 3) In conclusion, I feel that the design is dis-jointed and fussy, displaying many design features that are not vernacular within the Howardian Hills AONB. As I feel that the current design would have a significant adverse visual impact on the AONB I therefore wish to lodge an Objection to the proposal. Paul Jackson

Paul Jackson

From: dm@ryedale.gov.uk
Sent: 17 October 2016 16:16
To: Paul Jackson
Subject: Consultee Comments for Planning Application 16/01257/FUL

Mr Paul Jackson,

You have been sent this email because you or somebody else has submitted a consultee comment on a Planning Application to your local authority using your email address. A summary of your comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 4:15 PM on 17 Oct 2016 from paul.jackson@northyorks.gov.uk.

Application Summary

Reference: 16/01257/FUL

Address: Lodge Farm 1 Scackleton Lane Scackleton
YO62 4NA

Proposal: Erection of a 4 bedroom detached dwelling and attached double garage with additional domestic living space above, following the demolition of existing dwelling and associated outbuildings

Case Officer: Rachel Smith

[Click for further information](#)

Comments Details

Comments: Having checked my comments on the previous design, I'm pleased to note that the new design addresses almost all of the design issues that I raised. It also has a significantly better arrangement for the garage, and I'm therefore pleased to be able to say that I have no further observations or comments to make. Paul Jackson

Paul Jackson

From: dm@ryedale.gov.uk
Sent: 19 August 2016 15:01
To: Paul Jackson
Subject: Consultee Comments for Planning Application 16/01225/FUL

Mr Paul Jackson,

You have been sent this email because you or somebody else has submitted a consultee comment on a Planning Application to your local authority using your email address. A summary of your comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 2:57 PM on 19 Aug 2016 from paul.jackson@northyorks.gov.uk.

Application Summary

Reference: 16/01225/FUL

Address: Bridge Farm Station Road Gilling East
Helmsley YO62 4JW

Proposal: Erection of a block of 3no. timber stables
and retention of an existing mobile field
shelter for private use

Case Officer: Tim Goodall

[Click for further information](#)

Comments Details

Comments: I have the following comments to make on these proposals: 1) The roof should be a dark grey colour rather than light grey, so as to be in accordance with the Agricultural Buildings design guidance for the AONB and hence blend better with the surroundings. 2) No details are given for the proposed gateway. If this is to be of an 'agricultural' type, with simple posts and a field-type gate, then I don't have any concerns. If however the gateway is planned to be more substantial, with brick or stone piers and taller wrought iron gates, then further details need to be supplied. Paul Jackson

Paul Jackson

From: dm@ryedale.gov.uk
Sent: 26 August 2016 17:27
To: Paul Jackson
Subject: Consultee Comments for Planning Application 16/01278/OUT

Mr Paul Jackson,

You have been sent this email because you or somebody else has submitted a consultee comment on a Planning Application to your local authority using your email address. A summary of your comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 5:23 PM on 26 Aug 2016 from paul.jackson@northyorks.gov.uk.

Application Summary

Reference: 16/01278/OUT
Address: Land Off Malton Road Swinton Malton
North Yorkshire
Proposal: Erection of an agricultural workers dwelling
(site area 0.063ha)
Case Officer: Tim Goodall
[Click for further information](#)

Comments Details

Comments: I have the following comments to make on this proposal: 1) With the existing grain store on the site, and the concurrent application 16/01277/FUL for a new livestock building, consideration of this proposal for an agricultural workers dwelling needs to take into account some element of cumulative impact. 2) The proposed dwelling would be seen most significantly in short-distance views from the north on Swinton Lane, and in longer-distance views from the Public Right of Way between Broughton Lane and Close Farm to the south east. 3) It is unclear whether the proposed dwelling would sit at the current ground level or at the level of the existing grain store, which is some 2m lower. 4) The eastern end of the northern limestone ridge of the Howardian Hills is characterised by scattered farmsteads or other groups of buildings, with attendant copses of trees. Examples include Swinton Grange, Home Farm, Close Farm and the houses on Laundry Lane. Any new farmstead should therefore look to emulate this character and a comprehensive landscaping scheme would therefore be needed. Because of the nature of the landform and existing hedges and trees, some of the landscaping needed could be achieved by changing the management of

existing assets, e.g hedges. 5) Suggested landscaping measures needed therefore include: allowing the roadside hedge on Swinton Lane to grow to a minimum height of 2.5m, between the farm entrance and the informal parking area; allowing the hedge on the southern side of the site (if it is in the applicant's control) to grow to a minimum height of 2m and also planting some individual trees; allowing the hedge on the eastern side of the site (if it is in the applicant's control) to grow to a minimum height of 2m and also planting some individual trees; planting a landscape strip of trees and shrubs along the northern boundary of the site, to link with landscaping proposed as mitigation for the new livestock building (16/01277/FUL). 6) A site meeting might be beneficial to discuss some of these proposals. Paul Jackson

Paul Jackson

From: dm@ryedale.gov.uk
Sent: 26 August 2016 17:16
To: Paul Jackson
Subject: Consultee Comments for Planning Application 16/01277/FUL

Mr Paul Jackson,

You have been sent this email because you or somebody else has submitted a consultee comment on a Planning Application to your local authority using your email address. A summary of your comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 5:13 PM on 26 Aug 2016 from paul.jackson@northyorks.gov.uk.

Application Summary

Reference: 16/01277/FUL
Address: Land At Malton Road Swinton Malton North
Yorkshire
Proposal: Erection of an agricultural building for the
housing of livestock
Case Officer: Tim Goodall
[Click for further information](#)

Comments Details

Comments: I have the following comments to make on this proposal: 1) With the existing grain store on the site, and the concurrent application 16/01278/OUT for an agricultural workers dwelling, consideration of this proposal for a new livestock building needs to take into account some element of cumulative impact. 2) The proposed building will be seen most significantly in short-distance views from the north on Swinton Lane, and in longer-distance views from the Public Right of Way between Broughton Lane and Close Farm to the south east. 3) It is assumed that the proposed building will have the same floor level as the existing grain store, as part of the site is already excavated and levelled. 4) The design of the building uses normal modern methods and materials. Concrete wall panels can however appear very stark and the most prominent elevation will be the northern one, visible from Swinton Lane. For this reason, I would like to see the Yorkshire Boarding on this elevation extending over the concrete panels to ground level to provide a better external appearance. [It is assumed that the North Elevation and South Elevation labels have been transposed on the plans, with the door actually proposed to be facing the 'hardstanding area']. 5) The use of

anthracite grey roof panels is noted. As 'Anthracite' however appears to be more of a brand name rather than a specific colour, and the shade can vary between manufacturers, the colour should approximate to BS4800 10A11 Charcoal Grey. The existing grain store has a roof of an acceptable colour that conforms to this specification. 6) The eastern end of the northern limestone ridge of the Howardian Hills is characterised by scattered farmsteads or other groups of buildings, with attendant copses of trees. Examples include Swinton Grange, Home Farm, Close Farm and the houses on Laundry Lane. Any new farmstead should therefore look to emulate this character and a comprehensive landscaping scheme will therefore be needed. Because of the nature of the landform and existing hedges and trees, some of the landscaping needed could be achieved by changing the management of existing assets, e.g hedges. 7) Suggested landscaping measures needed therefore include: allowing the roadside hedge on Swinton Lane to grow to a minimum height of 2.5m, between the farm entrance and the informal parking area; allowing the hedge on the southern side of the site (if it is in the applicant's control) to grow to a minimum height of 2m and also planting some individual trees; planting a landscape strip of trees and shrubs along the northern boundary of the site, extending as far as the existing square of trees planted as part of the approval for the grain store building. 8) A site meeting might be beneficial to discuss some of these proposals. Paul Jackson

Paul Jackson

From: dm@ryedale.gov.uk
Sent: 31 August 2016 13:20
To: Paul Jackson
Subject: Consultee Comments for Planning Application 16/01309/FUL

Mr Paul Jackson,

You have been sent this email because you or somebody else has submitted a consultee comment on a Planning Application to your local authority using your email address. A summary of your comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 1:16 PM on 31 Aug 2016 from paul.jackson@northyorks.gov.uk.

Application Summary

Reference: 16/01309/FUL
Address: Coulton House Farm Coulton Lane Coulton
Helmsley YO62 4NE
Proposal: Erection of an agricultural building for the
housing of pigs
Case Officer: Joshua Murphy
[Click for further information](#)

Comments Details

Comments: I have the following comments to make on this proposal: 1) The existing farm buildings occupy the flatter ground adjacent to the main street of the village and hence any new building is inevitably going to have to be somewhat separated from the main yard. The chosen location is however in a small hollow on the sloping ground and views of it from the Public Footpaths to the east will be relatively limited. 2) The use of dark grey roof panels is noted. 'Anthracite' is often used to describe a dark grey colour but this appears to be more of a brand name rather than a specific colour. As the shade can vary between manufacturers, the colour used for the roof sheets should approximate to BS4800 10A11 Charcoal Grey. Paul Jackson

Ox Pasture Wood felling licence application 5 Years

Introduction

Ox Pasture Wood is 16ha in size, of which 14ha is an ancient woodland site (site assessment carried out by Andrew Weston on 20th June 1991). The Ancient Woodland Inventory categorises the wood as 17ha of Ancient Semi-Natural woodland.

Andrew Weston described the wood as:

“Plantation, mainly of larch and sycamore, with occasional oak (*Q. robur*) and Norway spruce. Some ASNW on the northern central boundary with hazel coppice and small wetland. Flora generally moderately uninteresting”.

The site was rated by Andrew Weston as C/D in terms of conservation status (range A – E, high to low) and it is not designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation.

Nonetheless, the survey species list notes some of the more common Ancient Woodland Indicator plants such as bluebell, dog’s mercury and male fern as being Frequent, with others such as wood sorrel being Occasional. Out of the 46 native ground flora species found by Weston, he considered 8 of them to be ‘notable’.

My site visit on 20th June 2016 confirmed the basic description, although with some easily visible species such as bluebell, male fern and wood sorrel being more generally abundant now than when Weston conducted his survey. This is likely to be due to the change in canopy light conditions since Weston’s survey 25 years ago. There are occasional semi-mature oaks in the canopy, with a small amount of elder in the understorey.

Remnant features (as per UKFS)

The Biodiversity Guidelines contained in the UK Forestry Standard state that:

“All plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS) are likely to have retained at least some features of ecological and cultural interest and provide valuable opportunities for restoration. The minimum required by the UKFS is to ensure these remnant features are retained. The highest priorities for restoration are sites where irreplaceable features and vulnerable species survive.”

In order to assess whether proposals might meet this UKFS requirement it is necessary to define the “remnant features” for the proposed felling area.

As regards this compartment of Ox Pasture Wood, I consider the following description to constitute the Remnant Features:

“The ground flora characteristics divide into three basic types. The southern third of the compartment consists principally of bramble with occasional wood sorrel and bluebell. The central third is a transitional zone between the dense bramble in the southern part and the fern-dominated northern section. The northern third of the compartment consists of abundant male fern, bluebell and wood sorrel.”



Northern section, showing male fern, bluebell and wood sorrel



Central section, showing transition to more frequent bramble and occasional bracken

In order to be compliant with the UKFS, the proposals will need to demonstrate that the ground flora currently present in this stand (the Remnant Features) will be retained under the proposed replacement tree species.

Proposed works

Clear fell larch, presumably retaining any broadleaves.

Replant with the following:

- 30% Norway spruce
- 30% Sitka spruce
- 10% Western red cedar
- 30% Douglas fir

Trees to be planted in a regular pattern at a density of 2250 trees/ha.

Comment: The high survival rate of ancient woodland ground flora means that the effect of restocking with 100% evergreen conifers will seriously impact on the current and potential ecological value of the site through shading and changes to soil biochemistry. Some small sections of Ox Pasture wood have been planted with Norway spruce and the effect on the woodland ground flora is marked (see photo below).

I'm afraid that I cannot conclude that such a proposal will satisfy the UKFS requirement to retain the remnant features of this PAWS woodland.



Negligible ground flora under Norway spruce canopy

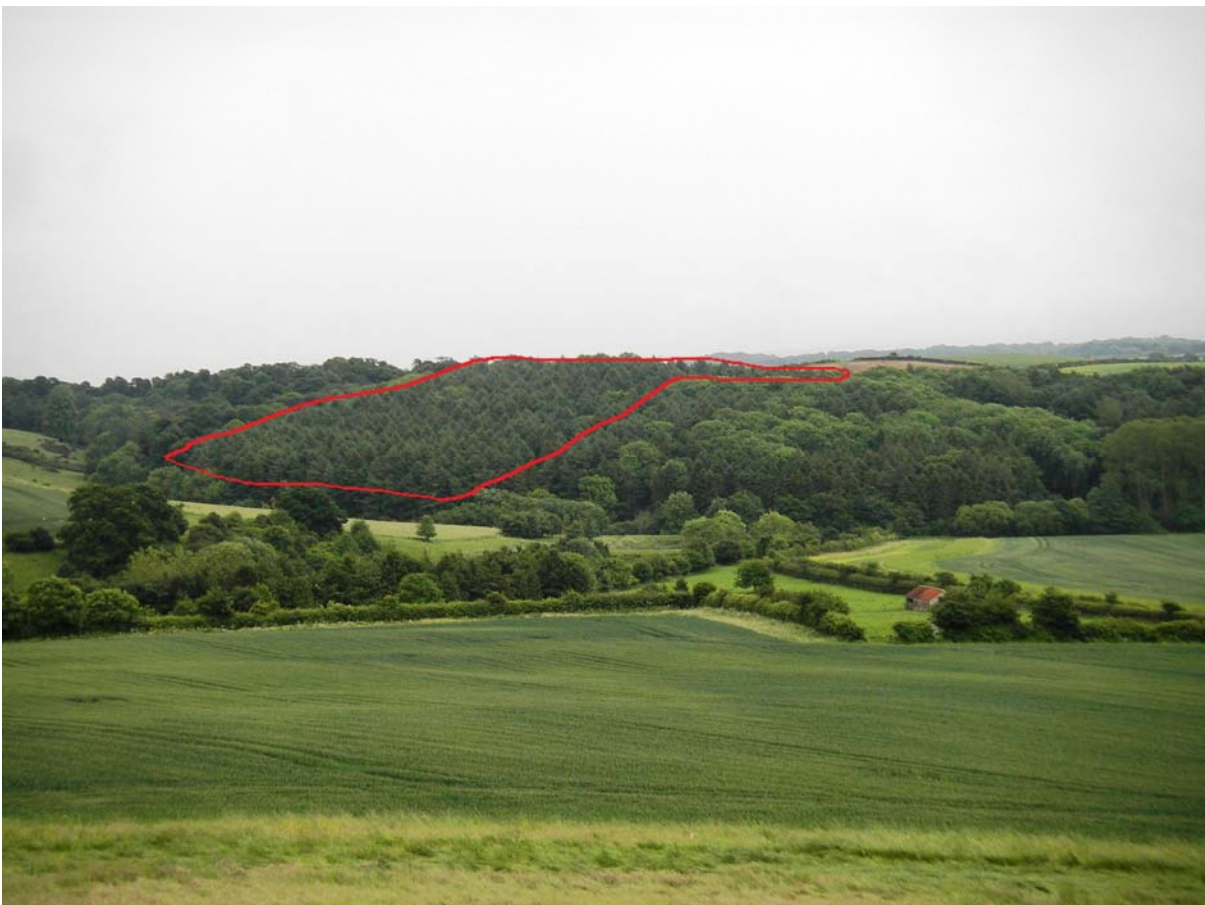
Landscape impacts

Ox Pasture Wood is prominent in the AONB landscape and is viewed from a variety of points on the extensive network of Public Rights of Way to the south of Terrington. The Centenary Way regional route passes close by and the Public Footpaths and Bridleways are also utilised for a number of locally promoted AONB self-guided routes.

The landscape character of the remainder of Ox Pasture wood is principally broadleaved, as is Mowthorpe Dale Wood to the north and Stittenham Wood to the south west. In many ways the view from the top of the hill on the Birkdale Farm access drive is one that typifies the Howardian Hills AONB landscape - low rolling hills with arable and pasture fields on the flatter ground and significant woodland cover on the valley sides.

The proposed felling coupe is of a reasonably large size, but I'm happy that it's within the general scale of the woodland in the vicinity and that the size of the felling area itself would not have an unduly large landscape impact.

I do however feel that the conversion of this section of Ox Pasture Wood from deciduous larch to evergreen conifers would have an adverse visual impact on the AONB landscape. The surrounding woodland is almost entirely broadleaved plantation or mixed conifer/broadleaved plantation. As such, a significant block of evergreen conifers would create a discordant visual feature that would draw the viewer's eye.



View of felling coupe from Birkdale Farm access drive (The Centenary Way)



Mowthorpe Dale Wood



Stittenham Wood

Conclusions

The Forestry Commission is under two obligations in this instance – to ensure that the proposals meet the requirements of the UK Forestry Standard, and that regard is paid to conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB, as required by Section 85 of the Countryside & Rights of Way Act (2000).

Objective NE3.3 of the Howardian Hills AONB Management Plan 2014-19 states: “Encourage the restoration of habitats that have declined in interest but still retain significant ecological potential, particularly Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites...”

Given that a number of potentially suitable restock species such as ash and larch are unavailable due to current or potential tree disease restrictions, the alternative options might include:

1. Restoration to native broadleaved woodland. As a PAWS site on the Ancient Woodland Inventory such a proposal should be eligible for funding under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme.
2. Restoration to broadleaved woodland. Species observed already growing on the site include sycamore, oak and beech, which could provide the basis for a more commercial broadleaved crop.
3. Planting a conifer/broadleaved mix. The choice and proportions of species would need to ensure that the remnant features of the PAWS site are not lost.

In relation to Option 3, some useful observations were made in adjacent parts of Ox Pasture Wood. As already noted, a small stand of Norway spruce has suppressed the ground flora almost entirely (see below).



Ground flora under Norway spruce

Turning through 180 degrees on the same spot however shows a small mixed stand of Norway spruce, larch and sycamore. Native woodland ground flora survival is significantly better, even though clearly suppressed to some degree.



Ground flora under Norway spruce, larch and sycamore

Given that the spread of *Phytophthora ramorum* is likely to lead to an increased incidence of replacing larch crops on PAWS sites with evergreen conifers, it would seem that there is an urgent need to identify potential new crop mixtures that provide an economic return for woodland owners whilst still retaining 'remnant features' as required by the UK Forestry Standard.

The AONB is keen to work with both the Forestry Commission and woodland managers to identify solutions in cases such as this.

Whilst we believe that funding should generally come from national grant schemes or economic activity, the AONB does have some grant resources that it can deploy to assist with conservation management operations. In the past this has included help with uneconomic work such as hazel coppicing, but more recently has included top-up payments to cover the increased costs of planting native broadleaves as opposed to conifers. The list of eligible items is extensive and grant can be considered for all operations and/or capital items that would contribute to the delivery of the agreed outcome for the particular scheme.

Paul Jackson
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