

**CUMBERLAND COUNCIL  
CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

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**Proposal:** Conversion of barn to form additional letting bedrooms associated with Sella Park Hotel

**Address:** Barn adj. Sella Grange, Sella Park Hotel, Calder Bridge

**Reference:** 4/23/2135/OF1

**Date:** 01/11/23

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**Description:** Red sandstone barn of two stories, located adjacent to the road fronting Sella Park. It is divided from the hotel via a characterful sandstone wall, which forms the boundary of the listed building's curtilage, although the barn itself is considered outside the curtilage.

**Conclusion:** **Request further information and suggest design revision** (See text in bold)

**Assessment:**

- This barn conversion appears to be a good way of giving the building a viable use and a more sustainable long-term future.
- One of the key challenges in preserving the character of a building of this sort when converting it is in inserting new openings, as such barns were typically constructed with few windows, and they were distinctly “un-domestic” in character.
  - There are apparently ventilation slits, although these have been infilled at some point and it is not proposed to reopen them. These are visible as paired stones just below the eaves on the east elevation. These make a positive contribution to the significance of the building, as the setting of Sella Park.



- **It would be helpful if the locations of these stones could be indicated on the elevation drawing so it can be seen that the proposed new openings do not disturb them.**
- **I am curious as to why Bedroom 7 has a differently shaped opening to Rooms 8 and 9 as this does not appear to be a reopened doorway, and wonder if a window of the same proportions as those next to it would be better?**
- The appearance of the building could be improved if it were possible to dispense with the rooflights on the bathrooms for Bedrooms 9 and 10 – removing 9 would allow the entire roof pitch facing Sella Park to remain free of rooflights and removing 10 on the other side would allow the three remaining there to align. **I'd be grateful for comment on whether these two can be omitted, leaving those en suites artificially lit as with the other bathrooms in the development.**
- The proposed plans show a lining system of insulation and boarding, which risks introducing interstitial condensation behind, leading to problems. This lining system is also likely to introduce substantial cold bridging around openings. I appreciate the proposed plan is not a construction detail drawing, but draw attention to these areas. For example, the external access to Room 5 is likely to suffer from considerable cold bridging and potential development of internal black mould, and this will apply more generally to the other openings.
  - To show how this can be avoided, **an example detail drawing should be provided showing the insulation design into the reveals of openings.**
- **More detailed drawing, or an equivalent such as a quotation sheet or annotated brochure, should be provided for the external windows and doors, to demonstrate their likely impact** on the non-designated heritage asset itself and the setting of Sella Park, which extends to the area that contributes to Sella Park's significance or allows it to be appreciated, as well as to views from Sella Park itself.

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#### **Relevant Policies and Guidance:**

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 establishes a need “in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works [for the Local Planning Authority to] have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest” [Section 16(2)]. This requirement also applies to the granting of planning permission affecting a listing building or its setting [Section 66(1)].

Paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) asserts that “Development that is not well designed should be refused”.

NPPF para. 197 states that “In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation...”

NPPF para. 199 states, in the case of designated heritage assets, “great weight should be given to the asset's conservation”, irrespective of whether potential harm is substantial, less-than-substantial, or total loss. Where harm to a designated heritage asset is less-than-substantial, it should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal (para. 202).

Paragraph 203 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states the effect on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account when making decisions.

Opportunities should be sought for new development within conservation areas and the settings of heritage assets that enhances or better reveals their significance. (para. 206)

The former Copeland Borough Council's Local Plan contains a number of relevant policies:

- Local Plan Policy ST1C(ii) highlights the importance of protecting, enhancing and restoring the Borough's cultural and heritage features and their settings.
- ST1D emphasizes the council's commitment to creating and retaining quality places.
- ENV4A stresses the importance of protecting listed buildings, conservation areas and other features considered to be of historic, archaeological or cultural value.
- ENV4B outlines support for heritage-led regeneration, ensuring assets are put to appropriate, viable and sustainable uses.
- DM10 emphasises the need for high quality design and quality places. Part B requires design to respond to local character at multiple scales, paying attention to plot size and arrangement, massing and scale, interstitial spaces, and materials. Part C requires the incorporation of existing features such as landscape and vernacular style.
- DM15A – Part D outlines the need, in converting a rural building to residential use, for the proposal to preserve the essential character of the building and its surroundings. In this regard, existing features of interest and external facing materials should be retained.
- DM27A outlines support in principle for developments that “protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic, cultural and architectural character of the borough's historic sites and their settings”.
- DM27D highlights the necessity of avoiding disrespectful alterations, substantial demolition, adverse effects on setting or views, or changes of use that harm the conservation or economic viability of a listed building.

Sammy Woodford

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