

PFK

PLANNING

Change of Use of Agricultural Buildings

Traditional agricultural buildings make an important contribution to the landscape character and local distinctiveness of Cumbria. The Planning team at PFK discuss the wide range of opportunities for the conversion of agricultural buildings

Can PFK help you?

If you would like any further information please contact our friendly team.



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Traditional agricultural buildings make an important contribution to the landscape character and local distinctiveness of Cumbria. The restructuring and diversification of farm businesses has increased demand for both living and working in rural landscapes. As such, the reuse and renovation of farm buildings that no longer have a viable agricultural use has become a sustainable option. New residential and commercial uses that enhance the historic character and significance of these buildings are positively encouraged through the planning system.

Conversion or the change of use of any traditional farm building generally requires planning permission. The acceptability of conversion proposals is determined according to the principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Local Planning Authority's Local Plan. These principles relate to the historical significance, character, layout and location of the agricultural buildings and their contribution to the wider landscape. Due to potential planning policy restrictions on new uses, extensions or buildings in rural areas, early consideration of the wider policy context is advised.

Planning policy requires the conversion of agricultural buildings to have high-quality, thoughtful designs. In particular, designs should take account of:

- The wider landscape and setting – this will then inform detailed design decisions about spaces, curtilage, access, visual impact and enclosure, materials, surfaces, boundary treatments and planting;
- The extent of past change – this will identify opportunities to retain distinctive features, reinstate anything that may have been lost or develop other parts of the site in an appropriate way;
- Architectural styles and historic interest of the building – this includes any materials and details that need to be respected in order to maintain the character of the farmstead and the wider landscape, and
- Any designations by which the site is affected, including National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The PFK Planning team have extensive knowledge and experience of preparing and managing planning applications for the conversion of agricultural buildings, in particular barn conversions. Planning applications have a much greater chance of success if the opportunities and constraints are identified and considered with professional advisers at an early stage. PFK Planning will help with the following:

- Identifying the suitability of the site for its intended use and opportunities to conserve and enhance the distinctive character of the farmstead and its setting;
- Preparing and managing planning applications for new development, change of use or listed building consent including an accompanying Planning Statement and Heritage Statement;
- Co-ordinating the necessary inputs from other professionals, and
- Managing ongoing dialogue with the Local Planning Authority during the life of the planning application.

If you would like to discuss the change of use or conversion of an agricultural building, or if you have any other planning queries, please do not hesitate to contact the Planning team at PFK – email: planning@pfk.co.uk, tel: 01768 890140.