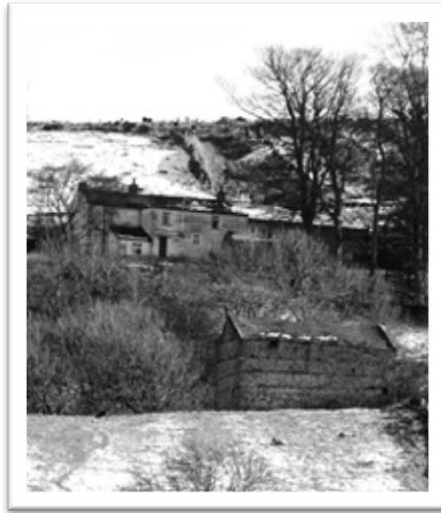


Bishopdale 2010

The different ways that two planning applications for farmhouses in Bishopdale were dealt with by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority were brought to the attention of the Association of Rural Communities (ARC). Both date from the 17th century and overlook the B6160: Forelands from the south side and Cote Bottom from the north.



Forelands: Permission was granted by a planning officer under delegated powers for a new building on the north side of the farmhouse with four windows on the first floor and larger ones below them overlooking several footpaths and the road in Bishopdale. This means that the new build will dominate the traditional farmhouse when viewed from Bishopdale. There will be a glazed link between the two buildings which would be visible at close range from a footpath to the south west.

Cote Bottom: The planning officer recommended refusal of the planning application for a rebuilt cowhouse and a rear extension on the basis that it would have a harmful effect on the appearance of a venerable building. He would have preferred that the extension

looked more like a barn (site meeting, January 22, 2010). He also stated that the house occupied a prominent position and the extension could be viewed at close range from a footpath. The extensions would be on the north side and would not affect the view of the farmhouse from the B6160 and footpaths to the south in Bishopdale.

The parish councillors for Thoraby supported the application as they considered the rebuilding of the barn and the addition of a two storey extension to be appropriate in scale to the site and the existing house. The recommendation of the officer was, however, accepted by just one vote at the March 2010 planning committee meeting.

One local resident asked how the same planning officer could make such widely different decisions regarding these two farmhouses.

November 2010

Planning Inspector Graham Snowdon granted Mr and Mrs Arthur Black permission to construct a kitchen with bedrooms above it. He did not accept that the argument put forward by the YDNPA that this extension would dominate the original building.

The inspector said that the main issue was the effect of the proposed extensions on the character and appearance of the existing farmhouse and wider landscape. Cote Bottom, he explained, was a typical linear, stone built Dales farmhouse. Some of it dates back to the 1650s but there have been many alterations over the years. "Nevertheless, it retains much character and interest in the local vernacular context," he said.

The Blacks also wanted to rebuild the barn attached to the farmhouse. The inspector said he had no objection to the form or height proposed and that this did not seem to be an issue with the YDNPA. He did uphold the view of the YDNPA that the proposed windows in the barn were not in accord with the Design Guide but did see the operational need of the roof lights in what would be a workshop so long as they were as small as practicable. He said: "The Design Guide suggests that with conversions of former agricultural buildings, such as barns, the contrast in character with the original residential building should be maintained."

The inspector added he had taken into consideration the need to improve the accommodation to secure the long-term occupancy of the property - a factor which had been emphasised by Aysgarth and District Council. He added: "I have also had regard to the arguments advanced on behalf of the appellants regarding equitable and consistent decision-making in the area. However, each case has to be considered on its merits, and the other developments in the area, which have been cited - particularly that at Forelands - are insufficiently comparable in form or arrangement to carry much weight as a determining factor at the present appeal."

postscript: the young family at Cote Bottom subsequently left the Yorkshire Dales.