

8. conversions



The Old Post Office, Wildboarclough - formerly offices to the now demolished Crag Works, subsequently a post office and village hall, now a private house. The epitome of an attractive loose fit building adaptable over time.



Small gymnasium in part of a listed wheelhouse, Calver Mill



Offices in a former wood store building, Bakewell

8.1 Historically, buildings have always been converted to new uses when circumstances dictated. It may have been an old farmhouse becoming a cow-house or shippoon when a replacement farmhouse was built, or the ground floor of a town house becoming a shop. Today the demand is flowing the other way – for conversion to residential use.

8.2 Mills, chapels, churches, shippoons, hay barns and shops often become redundant. Without maintenance such buildings quickly fall into disrepair. Conversion is often the only feasible way of securing a viable future for the buildings. Although the main demand is for residential use, this is not always suitable or desirable, or indeed permitted in policy terms – particularly if the building is in the open countryside or is a listed building.

8.3 The building in question should be of sufficient historic or architectural merit to warrant its conversion. Planning permission is needed for a change of use. Factors such as location, size and character of the building and its means of access will all be assessed. The guiding principle behind the design of any conversion should be that the character of the original building and its setting should be respected and retained. This means that in most cases the barn or the mill or the chapel should afterwards look like a converted barn, mill or chapel, and not like a new house or a new block of flats. When converting traditional buildings, new uses should not require the construction of extensions or ancillary buildings.



Flats in a former mill, Bakewell



Use of a former barn as a microbrewery, Pilsley



Redundant chapel at Swythamley Hall Estate converted into a house

ENHANCEMENT



Conversion of former commill to dwelling, Nether Padley. The new vertical glazing to the rear extension replaces a modern first floor opening. An internal view of this feature appears on p15



Redundant outbuilding converted to a tea room, Tissington

8.4 The conversion of traditional buildings can offer opportunities to provide affordable homes to meet local needs. However in order to ensure that the new homes remain more affordable, they should not exceed 87 sq m total floor area. This may mean that only part of a building is converted, or that the complete building could provide more than one home. Even though the development must be within cost guidelines, high design standards are the same as for other residential conversions. For more information please refer to the Authority's Supplementary Planning Guidance: Meeting the local need for affordable housing in the Peak District National Park¹⁸.

8.5 See the *Detailed Design Guidance Note: Conversions*. English Heritage publishes useful advice on the conversion of farm buildings.



Outbuildings at Earl Sterndale, prior to conversion



Listed farm outbuilding converted into 2 dwellings, Earl Sterndale (note the unsubdivided courtyard and retention of large ground floor openings for storage)