



Report from the Head of Development Management to Development Control Committee

Application number: 7/2026/3049

Application type: Full Planning application

Applicant: Mr Tomas Leahy, Architecture Retreats Ltd

Location: Eastward Farm, Bampton, Penrith, CA10 2RJ

Grid reference: 351219, 517041

Proposal: Proposed change of use to a flexible use as a dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) or holiday letting accommodation

Report prepared by: Phil Nicholls, Area Planner

Report agreed by: Andrew Smith, Head of Development Management

Recommendation: APPROVE with conditions

1 About this report

- 1.1 The case planner has prepared this report, assessment and recommendation taking into account our policies (known as the Development Plan), written representations we have received, and any other material considerations.
- 1.2 Material considerations are things that are relevant to our decision making and which we are able to take into account – for example site specific factors, or Government planning policy (the National Planning

Policy Framework) and Government planning guidance (the National Planning Practice Guidance).

- 1.3 The Development Control Committee will determine the application at its meeting having regard to the provisions of the Development Plan, representations we have received, and all other material considerations, following a verbal and visual summary of the application by the case planner and, where applicable, after hearing any verbal representations made in accordance with our Policy for Public Speaking at Meetings.
- 1.4 Most applications are decided under powers delegated to the Head of Development Management. A small number of significant or more contentious applications are considered by our Development Control Committee as set out in our Scheme of Delegation.

2 Background and proposals

- 2.1 I am reporting this application to committee as Bampton Parish Council object to the proposals and recommend refusal.
- 2.2 Eastward is a Grade II* listed farmstead comprising a five-bedroom farmhouse, with two large attached barns, detached modern garages and a privy/store. The site is located on the western slopes of the Lowther Valley, on the border of the high fell fringe. The farm occupies an elevated position with the topography descending steadily towards Haweswater Beck on the east side and ascending on its western side to the high fells. It sits in a landscape dominated by pastoral agriculture.
- 2.3 The site is accessed via a rough track which leads off a single-track road that ultimately terminates at High Drybarrows Farm – beyond which begins Bampton Common access land. There is no public right of way past the farmstead.

- 2.4 Planning permission and listed building consent has been approved in 2022 for the conversion of the two large barns to ancillary accommodation, the redevelopment of the sheep-dip area, the construction of a swimming pool building in place of the two modern garages together with a new glazed link which would connect the farmhouse to the south barn. A succession of applications has subsequently followed to vary the design and agree details.
- 2.5 This application seeks planning permission to allow a flexible use of the building as either a dwellinghouse (use class C3) or as holiday letting accommodation.

3 Representations

- 3.1 Bampton Parish Council – Strongly object to this application and strongly recommend refusal. The access road to the property is only a single track with high banks and minimal passing places. With the dwellinghouse changing to a dual use as letting accommodation the traffic on the access road, which now supports four properties with one working farm, will increase and cause frustration and danger to walkers and drivers using it.
- 3.2 The property is a traditional Lakeland farmstead dwellinghouse. The Council would also question the integrity and transparency of the application. When the applicant approached the council and attended the Parish Council meeting the Council were informed the plans and renovations were for personal/family use only. It appears this was clearly not the ultimate intention.
- 3.3 Historic England – No comments

4 Development plan policies and other relevant guidance

- 4.1 The relevant Development Plan comprises:

- The Lake District National Park Local Plan 2020-2035

4.2 The following Lake District National Park Local Plan policies are relevant to this application:

- Policy 01: National and international significance of the Lake District
- Policy 02: Spatial strategy
- Policy 07: Historic environment
- Policy 15: Housing
- Policy 18: Sustainable tourism and holiday accommodation

- Design Code Supplementary Planning Document

4.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

4.4 There is no community plan in this area.

5 Main issues and assessment

5.1 Eastward is an unfettered dwellinghouse which could be permanently occupied, used as a second home or used as holiday letting accommodation, providing it falls within the scope of use class C3 (dwellinghouse).

5.2 Owing to the size of the building, which contains 10 bedrooms across around 1000sqm, the occupation of the entire site as holiday accommodation would be unlikely to constitute use as a dwellinghouse. It is for this reason that the applicant is seeking permission for a flexible use, to allow the building to be occupied as either a dwellinghouse or as holiday letting accommodation.

- 5.3 Given the lawful use of the building is as a dwellinghouse the only assessment to undertake is whether the proposed holiday letting use is acceptable in principle, taking into account any other material considerations.

Is the proposed holiday letting use of the building supported by policy?

- 5.4 Though a flexible use is sought, approval of the application would allow the applicant to operate the building as holiday accommodation on a permanent basis, with no guarantee that it would ever return to dwellinghouse use. For the application to succeed, use in this way alone must be found to be acceptable (despite the request for a flexible use).
- 5.5 Policy 15 (Housing) supported by the Housing SPD sets out an aim to achieve a balanced and resilient housing market with a high proportion of properties in permanent occupation and a supply of new homes that meets people's needs and maximises the delivery of affordable housing. Local Plan Policy 15 aims to facilitate the delivery of 1200 houses between 2020 and 2035, to increase the supply of homes to meet local community need.
- 5.6 Policy 18 (Sustainable tourism and holiday accommodation) outlines that proposals for the reuse of existing buildings for short term holiday letting accommodation will only be supported where they would:
- not utilise a building that is suitable for providing local need or affordable needs housing; and
 - not utilise a building which is suitable for providing employment use; or
 - form part of an agricultural or land-based rural business diversification proposal (see Policy 19).
- 5.6 The broad aim of Policy 15 is to achieve a better balance in the housing market. This requires a choice of house types, size and affordability.

Moreover, Policies 15 and 18 of the Local Plan are weighted in favour of retaining permanent residential dwellings irrespective of their size, affordability and occupation restrictions.

- 5.7 Though the application building is large, there is no inherent reason why it would not be suitable as a permanent home and it is reasonable to conclude that there would some level of demand for a larger dwelling this location. Use as holiday accommodation would represent the loss of the opportunity for the property to be permanent home within the housing stock.
- 5.8 For these reasons, I conclude that the loss of this residential dwelling to short-term holiday letting is contrary to Policies 15 and 18 of the Local Plan. In order to be found acceptable other policy or material considerations would need to outweigh this policy conflict.

Benefits to the listed building.

- 5.9 Eastward was listed Grade II in 1968 in recognition of the special interest of the farmhouse and barns. The site was re-assessed by Historic England in 2022 and upgraded to Grade II*. Grade II* buildings are particularly important buildings of more than special interest. Only around 5.8% of listed buildings nationally are Grade II*.
- 5.10 The re-assessment by Historic England, along with a detailed Historic Building Investigation carried out by Oxford Archaeology, has given us a clear understanding of the history, development and significance of the site. In summary the site has high architectural, evidential and historic significance comprising:
- a small farmstead of considerable character, that reflects the local vernacular in its materials and styling;
 - a highly legible evolved dwelling, whose phased development reflects changing architectural fashions and status;

- a C18th extended plan-form which preserves within it the C17th two-unit plan form, throughout which the hierarchy of the internal spaces is clearly expressed;
- the survival of a C17th and C18th domestic interior including a wealth of fixtures and fittings that illustrate the character of a well-appointed, Cumbrian farmhouse;
- chamfered structural beams throughout, and the retention of entire C17th and C18th roof structures which illustrate extensive evidence of contemporary carpentry methods and techniques;
- an associated pair of combination barns which display considerable vernacular character and survival, and which retain good examples of increasingly rare cattle and horse stalling.

5.11 Following the re-grading of the building, the Authority wrote to the owner raising concerns about the condition of the building, in particular several holes in the roof which were allowing water ingress that in turn was causing irreversible damage to historic features of the building. At the time the owner was advised that the Authority was actively considering its statutory powers under Sections 48, 54 and 55 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to serve a repairs notice on the building.

5.12 To address this the owner of the building submitted and gained approval for extensive works to the building group following extensive discussions and negotiations, supported by advice and feedback from Historic England, The Georgian Group, The Council for British Archaeology and The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. It is these works which are currently ongoing, of which currently 50% are complete.

5.13 The applicant in their submission has outlined that the income from holiday letting is necessary both to deliver the works and to sustain the building thereafter. This is in the form of financial appraisal and a schedule of works provided by the surveyor on the project.

- 5.14 Firstly, the appraisal states that the cost of the works exceeds the property's likely value. The total investment in building is currently estimated at approximately £3.55m, with around £2.75m of this being the cost of the works required to repair and renovate it to the standard commensurate with its Grade II* designation (as detailed in the schedule of works). Given the standard of work demanded by the building's status, the cost far exceeds the likely value of the completed property and on a conventional residential basis the investment cannot be recovered. As a dwellinghouse alone the scheme is not viable.
- 5.15 Secondly, the applicant tells us the works are funded by borrowing, which must be serviced. The works are being funded through borrowing of approximately £2m and with current rates of around 7–8%, servicing that borrowing costs in the region of £150,000 a year. The lending and of that funding is on dependent on the ability to let the property freely. In the absence of such flexibility, continued finance is unlikely to be forthcoming.
- 5.16 Thirdly, the ongoing maintenance liability of a Grade II* building requires a viable income stream. Supporting information sets out that in applying an industry-standard annual maintenance allowance of around 4% the estimated £4m rebuild value gives an ongoing maintenance cost of approximately £160,000 a year. The applicant tells us this is the standard of upkeep required to preserve the heritage asset properly, and it is a permanent commitment.
- 5.17 Finally, and linked to the points set out above, the income generated from renting the building as a single dwelling in comparison to holiday letting accommodation is insufficient to meet the requirements of maintenance and servicing of borrowing. It is estimated that the achievable rent for a large house with land in this area is around £35,000 a year. The application submission indicates this would not be viable. By contrast, it is estimated that letting the property as holiday accommodation could generate upwards of around £10,000 a week. On

the basis of roughly 40 lettings a year this income would cover the full annual maintenance liability and contribute towards the cost of the borrowing.

Planning balance - are the benefits to the listed building sufficient to outweigh the potential loss of a dwelling from the housing stock?

- 5.18 Local Plan Policy 07 (Historic Environment) seeks to conserve and enhance the significance of heritage assets, including the character, authenticity, integrity, setting and views of the historic environment. Where appropriate we will encourage the sympathetic reuse of buildings of archaeological or historic importance, which make a positive contribution to the landscape character or historic environment, and which reinforce local distinctiveness and sense of place.
- 5.19 The NPPF outlines 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.
- 5.20 It is evident that Eastward is of significant historic importance and policy directs me to consider the most viable use of the building, consistent with its conservation. The supporting financial information shows that the costs associated with the agreed renovation works, servicing the associated finance and the likely ongoing maintenance costs are unlikely to be met within the current available uses of the building.
- 5.21 Though the proposals have the potential to result in the loss of a dwelling from the housing market I am satisfied that the public benefits arising from the enhancement to the Grade II* listed group and its long term up-keep are sufficient to outweigh the loss of a dwelling from the housing stock.

- 5.22 As I am placing weight on the delivery of works to the listed building I need to consider whether a condition requiring certain works to be undertaken is necessary in this case. In the absence of a condition there is risk that the public benefits identified may not be delivered.
- 5.23 The permitted works to the building group are all essential to bring the buildings back up to an acceptable and habitable standard. I am also satisfied that as the scheme of works is integral to the project they will be delivered. In this instance therefore I do not consider a condition securing the implementation of the works to be necessary.

Other Matters – Highway impacts

- 5.24 The Parish Council have raised concerns that approving a holiday let in this location would generate unacceptable levels of additional traffic in an area with tight, narrow roads.
- 5.25 The public road from the crossroads to the property entrance is around 430m in length single-track without passing opportunities. I do acknowledge that the proposed holiday let would likely generate additional traffic movements over and above the current use, however I do not consider this would be significant, or would result in a highway safety concern. I therefore find the proposals would have an acceptable impact on local highway conditions.

6 Conditions

- 6.1 A condition would be required to secure the holiday letting use of the building.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 Taking into account the specifics of the site, in particular its Grade II* listed status and the ongoing and imperative renovation works and the

specific evidence provided about that, I am satisfied that the proposed holiday letting use is acceptable, compliant with the aims of the Local Plan and NPPF.

Recommendation: APPROVE with conditions

Conditions/Reasons

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiration of THREE years from the date hereof.

REASON: Imposed in accordance with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990.

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in conformity with the following submitted plans and details:
- Location Plan

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt.

- 3 When used as holiday letting accommodation, the accommodation shall only be occupied for the purposes of short-term holiday letting, and shall not be occupied by any one individual, family or group for a period exceeding 35 days in any calendar year.

A register of occupants shall be maintained by the owner, the content of which shall be provided to the Local Planning Authority within 14 days of a written request by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure that the accommodation hereby permitted is secured as short-term holiday accommodation in accordance with Policy 18 of the Lake District National Park Local Plan 2020-2035.

NPPF decision notice requirements

Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 Article 35(2) statement.

The Local Planning Authority did not identify problems arising in relation to dealing with the application.

Background papers

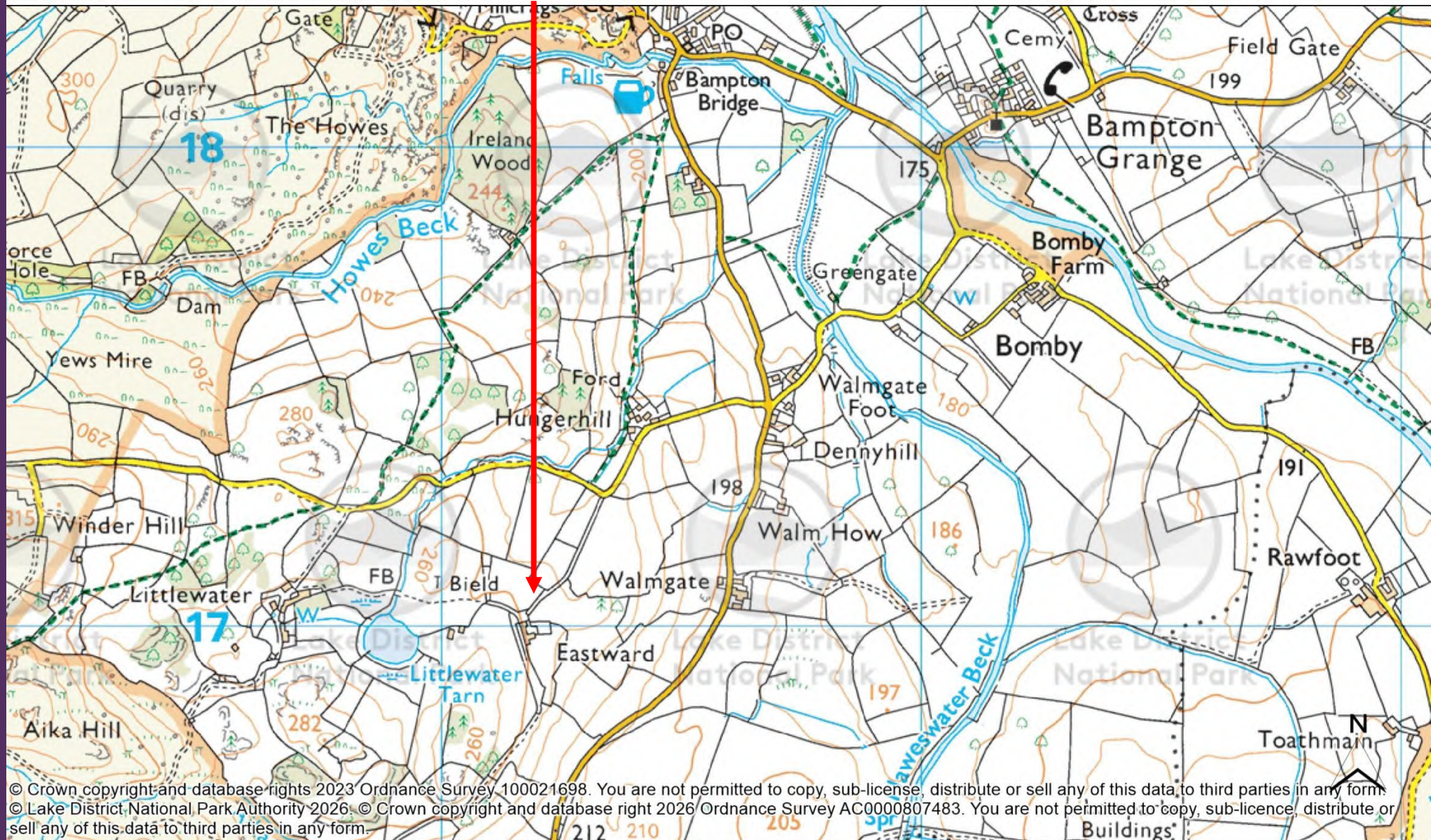
Background papers are available for inspection on the planning application file unless otherwise specified on that file as confidential by reasons of financial/personal circumstances in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985.

7/2026/3049

Eastward Farm, Bampton, CA10 2RJ

Proposed change of use to a flexible use as a dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) or holiday letting accommodation

Site

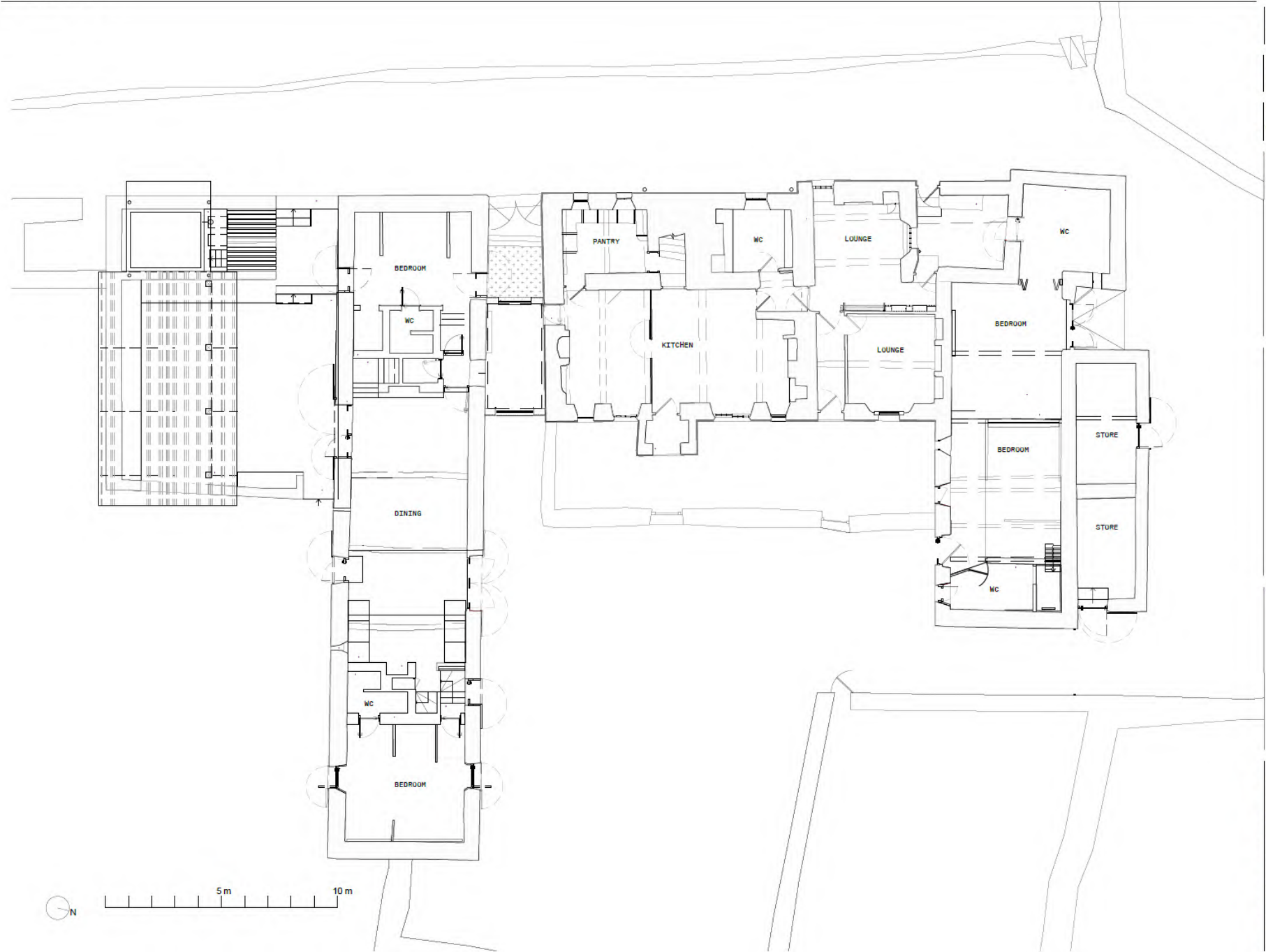


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Lake District
National Park Authority





044
Eastward Farm, Bampton, CA10 2R3
Drawing Title
ground floor plan

Completion by:
BL / TC
Scale:
1:150 @A3

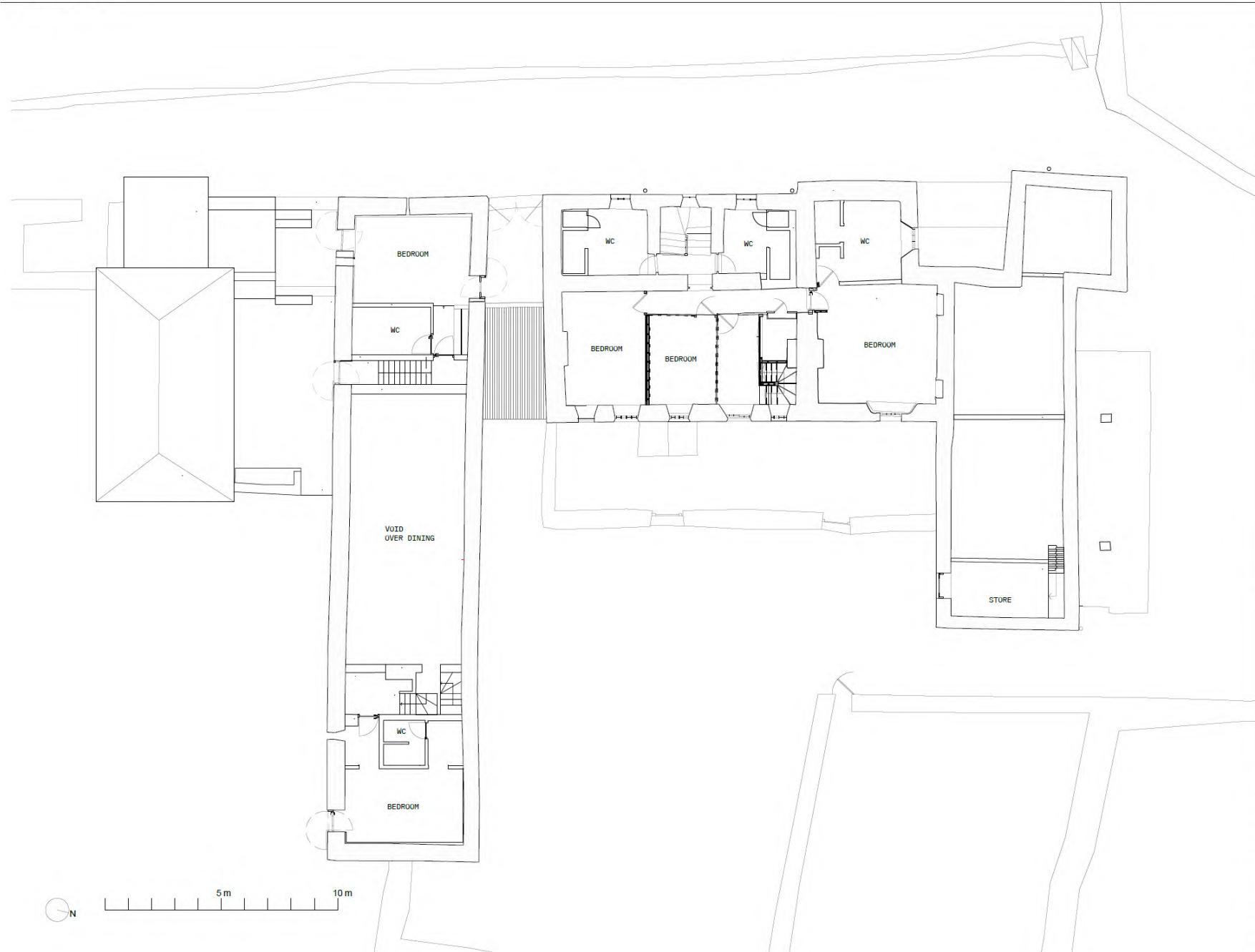
Current Revision:
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Issues:
- 29.04.26 Planning
- Change
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044
Eastward Farm, Banpton, CA10 2RJ
Drawing Title
first floor plan

Completion by:
BL / TC
Scale:
1:150 @A3

Current Revision:
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Issues:
- 29.04.26 Planning
Change
Of
Use

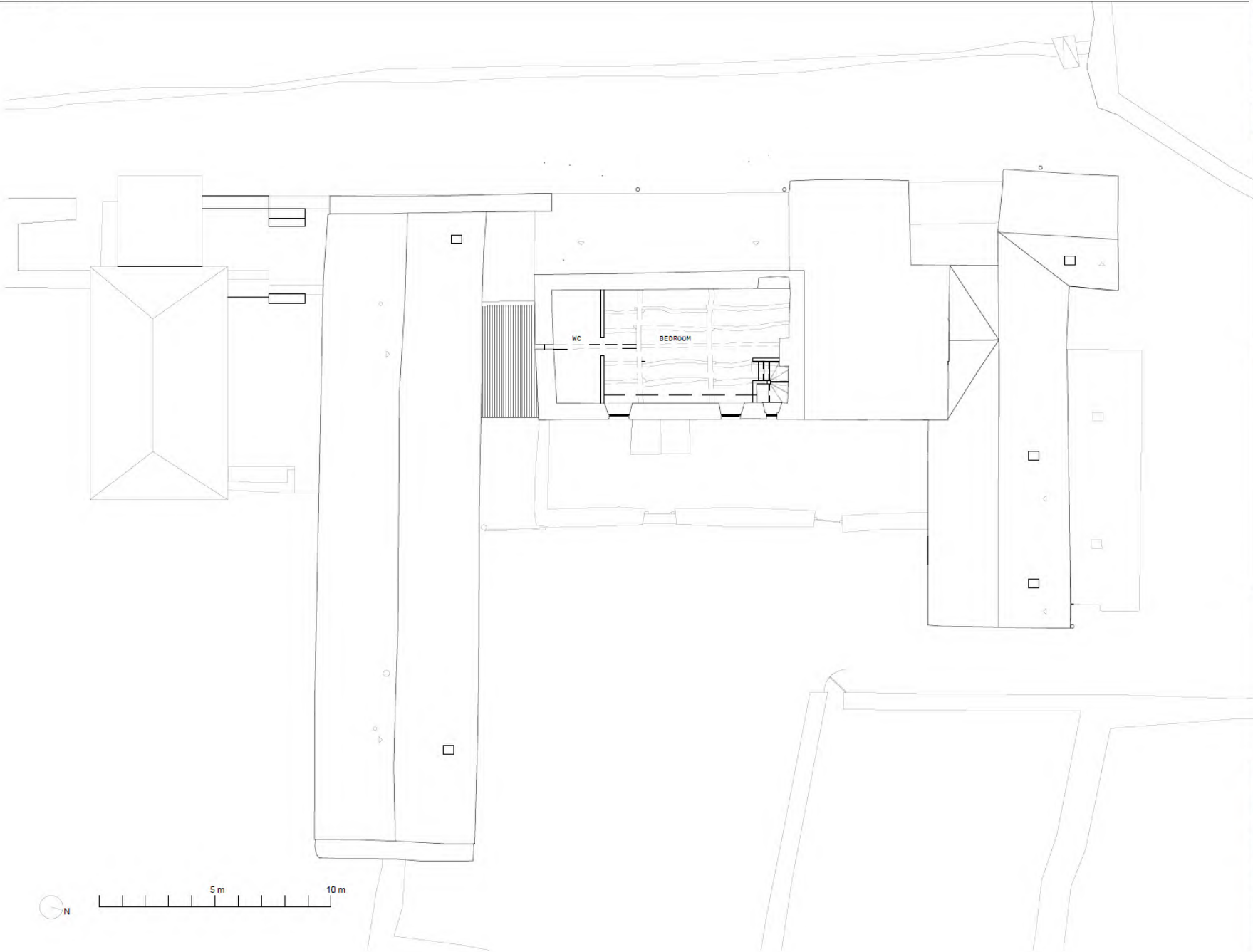
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044
Eastward Farm, Banpton, CA10 2R3
Drawing Title
second floor plan

Completion by:
BL / TC
Scale:
1:150 @A3

Current Revision:

Issues:

Date	Description
29.04.26	Planning Change of Use

Notes:

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