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PDA GROUP

PRICE DINSDALE ASSOCIATES LTD

CHARTERED ARCHITECTS

DESIGN STATEMENT

For

PROPOSED EXTENSIONS TO DWELLING

At

25, CORBAR ROAD, BUXTON

May 2012

Proposed Extensions to Dwelling

At

25, Corbar Road, Buxton

Supporting Design Statement – May 2012

Introduction

Corbar Road is a well-established residential road, to the west of the centre, and elevated above, the town of Buxton. The road gives access to the once-fashionable and still popular Corbar Wood, which once featured formal walks and vistas over the town, designed by Sir Joseph Paxton.

Corbar Road therefore encompasses a range of properties from grand institutional buildings such as the old John Duncan School, Wye House, and Corbar Hall, through an era of generously sized Victorian and Edwardian detached houses, villas and terraces, to twentieth century inter-war infill of modest scale and design.

The private Corbar Woods Lane, owned by Buxton Civic Association, gives access to a small number of late twentieth century "backland" properties, mostly of bungalow form. The south western end of Corbar Road, including the Application site and the properties immediately surrounding it, are including within the Buxton Park Conservation Area, and therefore it is necessary that this Application be accompanied by a Design Statement.

The Existing Property

The LPA's Character Appraisal for the Conservation Area dates the existing house between 1848 – 1879. Although not one of the largest properties to the south western end of Corbar Road, the Appraisal notes that this part of The Park was the most prestigious and the most swiftly developed.

The form of the existing building is a simple rectangular plan, although the roof form suggests an original intention for an "L" shape with a regular frontage facing south-east, and a south west facing wing going back from this façade. However, the resulting northerly corner that would have resulted has been infilled to complete a rectangular floor plan, and there is no indication in the external masonry that this was a later addition.

The roof planes are asymmetrical on the main "L" shaped roof, the planes to the south east and south west being considerable steeper than those to the north east and north west, as may be noted from the north west facing gable. However, they are entirely consistent with the roof form to the northerly "infill" area, and it's associated "catslide" roof.

The property is faced in coursed gritstone to the principle facades, with random gritstone to the rear, and with ashlar dressings throughout. It also features small pane casement windows, rather than sash type, and these are presumably original as the design incorporates semi-circular headed windows which, of course, could not have been of conventional sash form. The roof finish is of natural blue slate, the slates being of rectangular format to the principal (street-facing) planes, but, to the rear areas, featuring an unusual hexagonal format, presumably used as an infill left over from some other project.

During the latter part of the twentieth century, the property has suffered from three clumsily executed and visually inappropriate additions. These comprise:-

- A detached "Marley" garage, of prefabricated concrete panel construction, with asymmetric frontage, inappropriate finish, and pretentious detailing
- An attached "Georgian" conservatory, executed in softwood over a reconstructed stone base
- A meanly proportioned and poorly detailed single storey lean-to extension to the north-west facing gable.

Proposals

Introduction

The proposals have been informed from the outset by pre-Application advice sought from, and provided by, the LPA's Conservation Officer, Ms J Brooks. Ms Brooks was initially consulted, and met with the Applicants and their Agent on site, prior to the submission of any sketch proposals. Subsequently, and at her request, proposals were prepared and submitted informally for comment.

Ms Brooks returned extremely positive and helpful advice and criticism, which lead to the derivation of the Application proposals, which are very much lead by the Conservation Officer's input and recommendations.

Client Brief

The Client requirement was to improve ground floor living area, particularly to include a breakfast room, utility room, study, and "wet" room. At first floor, a new principal bedroom and en-suite was required.

Initial Proposals

Initial proposals placed all of the required additional accommodation in a two-storey extension to the south-western wing of the house, by extending the northwest gable back by some six and a half metres. The Conservation Officer, during her site visit, did not rule out such an extension, and agreed that extension of this "wing" to the rear was an obvious choice, although the extent proposed might prove to be too much.

She also noted the various recent additions to the property, and in particular criticised the conservatory and garage, whilst admitting that she was not empowered to cause their removal. As to the removal and replacement of the conservatory, she did suggest that a single storey lean-to extension to the rear of the property would be likely to be acceptable, but not to the gable of the two storey western "wing" mentioned above.

Proposals to extend the western "wing" by the aforementioned six and a half metres were drawn up and submitted for the Conservation Officer's comments. The CO replied that the resulting south west facade would be incongruously long, and that a reduction of the best part of two metres in length would be required. She reiterated in her comments the possibilities of a single storey rear extension.

Final Proposals

Further proposals were drawn up on the basis of the Conservation Officer's observations and advice, and form the present Application.

- The two storey extension to the west "wing" was reduced in length by nearly two metres from the earlier proposal. This also implies removal of the existing meanly conceived single storey lean-to extension to the present rear elevation.
- A single storey lean-to extension has been included to the rear elevation, as suggested by the Conservation Officer, which places the conservatory function in a much more natural relationship with the garden.
- This lean-to extension has been carried around the north-east corner, and extended along the north east façade to the same position as the frontage of the existing conservatory. However, the new extension is entirely traditional in character, of second-hand coursed pitched gritstone to match the original building, and with a blue slate roof. It is also over a metre narrower than the twentieth century conservatory, allowing pedestrian and wheelchair access around the east side of the property. The removal of the incongruous modern conservatory constitutes a significant local enhancement to the character of the Conservation Area.
- Proposals also envisage removal of the existing incongruous "Marley" sectional concrete garage, and its replacement with a traditional garage of pitched face second-hand gritstone and pitched blue slate roof. The removal of the Marley garage constitutes a further significant local enhancement to the character of the Conservation Area.

It is submitted that the proposed extensions have been designed entirely in a manner sympathetic to the character of the existing building, and respect the character of the Conservation Area.

It is further submitted that the removal of the incongruous modern additions to the property, and their replacement by the accommodation proposed in the present Application, also constitute significant local enhancements to the character of the CA.

PDA GROUP
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