3683 36-40 Fairfield Road

Design and Access Statement

This report has been prepared in support of a planning application for amendments and additions to the building at 36-40 Fairfield Road, with new vehicular crossover and rear garage.

Location

The site is Fairfield Road, Buxton. Fairfield Road is a major trunk road leading north west out of the town centre. It is a clearway and there is little parking available for residents in the area.

Fairfield Road has been designated an Improvement Zone by High Peak Borough Council. Therefore any amendments should seek to make a positive impact on the area rather than follow precedents of treatments to adjacent properties.



Site Location

Site - Context

36-40 Fairfield Road is in a row of similar three storey houses along Fairfield Road. These properties have been converted to multi-occupancy dwellings, with many insensitive amendments and additions made over the last 50-60 years.

The site is steeply sloping, with the rear garden level being two storeys lower than street level. There is sufficient space for vehicular access to one side of the building.





Fairfield Road is a clearway

Existing Building

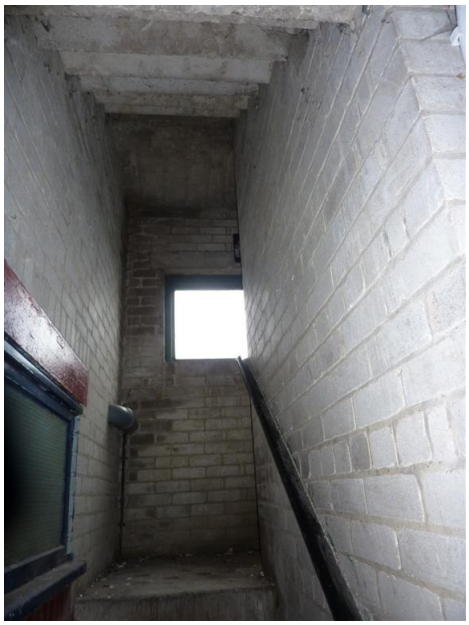
The existing building is a large Victorian stone building, three storeys high at the front, five storeys high to the rear, currently accommodating 8 flats. Although some of the flats are still occupied, the building has fallen into disrepair. The front boundary walls have been removed and the front garden concreted over.

The building was altered and extended about 30 years ago, relocating the staircases into new stair towers at each side of the building to allow internal rearrangement accommodate separate flats on each level.

The towers enclose return stairs, with two flights for each storey, to provide a central access point to the flat on each level. These staircases are extremely narrow, approximately 600mm wide, and do not allow adequate access for furniture or fire fighting.



There are stair towers on each side of the building



The stairs are extremely narrow



The building is in poor repair


The building is five storeys to the rear

The site slopes steeply to the rear, with the cellars, below the basement, being at ground level at the rear. The site has been unmaintained for many years resulting in thick scrub and self-seeded trees providing shelter for drug users. This scrub has been cleared by the current owner.

Design Process

Objectives

A new vehicular access leading to the rear of the property was required along with the construction of a garage at lower ground level. This would provide secure off-street parking and a private entrance of the rear of the building for the owner.

The brief included replacing each existing staircase with one which is compliant with current building regulations. These staircases would be contained within new side extensions sympathetic with the original building.

The alterations to the building comprised the refurbishment of seven of the existing flats and the union of a ground floor and basement flat to form a maisonette for the applicant. This includes an extension to the rear to link to the garage and rear porch at basement level, with an external stair leading to the kitchen door at ground level.

Proposals

The new side extensions accommodate a single width staircase running from ground to second floor level. The porches have been added at ground level to accommodate the front of the stair to contain the full run within the depth of the building.

The footprint of these side extensions cannot be set behind the existing building without the staircases being extended round onto the rear elevation at second floor level, which was considered detrimental. Therefore, the side extensions cannot be subservient. Instead the

proposals include the reroofing of the existing building with the proposals to give the appearance of a homogeneous building.

Materials

The side extensions will be constructed in coursed gritstone with stone quoins at the corners, to match the existing building. The front entrance doors will be reinstated; the ground floor shop front will be removed and replaced with bay windows which match adjacent properties.
The enlarged roof will be hipped, finished in slate. The rear elevation will be refurbished and finished in painted render to match existing.

The resultant building will look substantially better than the existing building.

Site Layout

The front boundary wall will be reinstated along the rear of the pavement, to match adjoin properties. A hedge will be planted behind this to hide a bin store area behind. A new pathway will lead to each new entrance; the hardstanding will be removed.

The proposals include a new vehicular access to the rear of the site to provide private and secure parking at lower ground level. The levels at the rear of the site will be rationalised to provide a garden area at garage level.

The land at the rear boundary will be set at existing level, with reinstated stone wall and planted beds to reduce the impact of the rear boundary on the houses below.



The stone rear boundary wall will be reinstated at 1100mm high



The planting at the rear boundary will match the bed below

Impact on Improvement Corridor

The proposals seek to renovate and improve a large multiple occupancy building which has fallen into disrepair. The proposals include removal of insensitive stair towers and replacement side extensions which are more in keeping, in both material and style, with the original building.

The proposals include the enlargement of one of the flats to accommodate the owner-occupier; this will provide positive control over the other occupants within the development.

Access

Existing Access

The existing access is via paths and steps to the existing stair towers at either side of the building.

There is no vehicular access into the site.

Proposed Access

The proposed access includes a new vehicular access ramp to access the rear of the site.

The proposals will comply with requirements of the building regulations.

Consultation

Local Planning Authority

A pre-application meeting was held on site on 15 August with Jane Colley. No concerns were raised with regards to the proposals in principle or to the improvement proposed to the front of the building.

Jane Colley expressed concern with regard to the impact of the proposed rear extension to the houses on the lower adjacent site. She requested that the site section drawings be extended to show the rear dwellings so that the impact on them could be assessed.
This site section as existing and proposed have been included in this submission.

The site section was reviewed with regards to the potential impact to the dwellings at the rear. The site is stepped back at the rear boundary, with a lower area of garden/planting to soften the boundary and reduce the impact of the dwellings.

The rear extension was reduced in size to comply with the planning officer's comments. The ground floor extension was omitted from the scheme.

Highways

The proposals include a vehicular crossover and new access to the rear of the site. The driveway is private for the use by the owner/occupier of the property who will be living in an enlarged flat on ground/basement floors. The success of the proposed scheme depends on secure on-site parking.

Comments were received from Derbyshire County Council noting that the gradient of the proposed drive was too steep.

The proposed ramp was amended to 1 in 10 throughout its length from the back of the carriageway to the proposed garage. This can be seen in the proposed site section.

The visibility distance in each direction is more than 45m required for a road with a speed limit of 30mph. A visibility splay drawing is included with this submission.

The officer noted that because of the location of the building near the town centre, off street parking was not required for the occupants of the flats.

An area for bin storage is proposed at the front boundary. Secure bicycle storage is located at the rear.