

Proposed Development at Fern Road, Buxton, SK17 9NH

PLANNING STATEMENT

Silson  
Planning  
Services

1. Introduction

The proposed development is on land between Fern Road and the rear of existing housing on Whiteknowle Road. The site has a frontage to London Road. The land previously formed part of the gardens and tennis courts to the former Haddon Hall Hotel which was located on the opposite side of London Road. The hotel was demolished due to structural instability and the site is currently under construction for a care home.

Permission for residential development on the application site was refused in 2007 ( HPK/2007/0403 ). The land was shown on the Local Plan Proposals Map as part of the open countryside and there were concerns over vehicle movements on site and the potential loss of trees.

These reasons for refusal have each been addressed in the current proposals.

1. The built up area boundary of Buxton is no longer a valid policy. Since the council has less than a 5 year supply of land other sites can be considered for release based on their suitability to accommodate new housing. That includes green field sites that would otherwise have a policy objection to them.
2. The access and parking provision proposed fully meets the current requirements of the Highway Authority (DCC).
3. The trees are all retained other than for T1 identified in the survey as being in a poor and possibly dangerous condition. One further tree T5, Horse Chestnut is recommended for works to remove some failed branches and those overhanging Fern Road. See report from Cheshire Woodlands.
4. The trees on the site are protected under the Derbyshire CC TPO 56 (1976) Cowdale, Staden and Harpur Hill.. The proposal has been discussed with Ruth Baker at Derbyshire CC who visited the site agreed verbally that the condition of T1 justified its felling and replacement.
5. Nine dwellings are proposed, four to the front of the site and five to the rear leaving the group of protected trees in the centre. The trees are quite closely packed and there is little value in adding another tree to the group itself . The replacement tree is proposed on the rear boundary of the site.
6. The tree constraints plan identifies the existing trees. The layout plan indicates the location of the replacement tree in the southern-most corner of the site. The council's Tree Strategy makes the point that protected trees are not intended to act as a bar to development and that maintaining the amenity value of the trees in the area is the priority.

## 2 Planning Policy

In the absence of an up to date Local Plan / core strategy the national Planning Policy Framework is the main guide to how applications should be determined. It makes a clear priority for new housing. The lack of a five year land supply adds a further urgency to the already strong policies in NPPF for the development of new residential accommodation. The principles of good design, local context and the retention of valued natural assets and amenity space set out in NPPF have informed the design of the proposals.

## 3. Layout and design

The dwellings along the frontage are proposed as three storey to reflect the context set by the existing buildings in the immediate vicinity and to continue the character of the built form fronting London Road. See photograph sheet.

Those to the rear of the site are 2.5 storey. The existing housing along Whiteknowle Road which borders one boundary of the site is three storey and substantially taller than the proposed dwellings. The care home currently under construction opposite the site is a substantial building reflecting the mass of the former Victorian hotel building.

The houses are proposed to reflect the Buxton vernacular using stone and slate and will be traditional in character and appearance. The Design Statement explores the rationale for the proposed houses in more detail. There is no requirement for a formal DAS for a scheme of nine houses as that regime now applies to major development only.

The retained trees form a dense copse which will filter the view of the houses at the rear of the site from the principle public viewpoint along London Road. The houses at the front will be seen in a spacious treed setting, in keeping with the character of White Knowle Road.

## 5. Access

Access is proposed off London Road using the former gateway into the land and has been designed to meet the highway authority standards. This avoids the possible conflict with existing traffic using Fern Road, which is narrow along the boundary with the site. It also avoids the need for any alterations to the junction of Fern Road and London Road that might change its rural and informal character.

The access road has been designed to run between the trees allowing them to be retained as an attractive amenity. The access road is proposed as a non-dig construction in order to avoid any impact on the root systems of the trees. The preference is for it to be fully permeable which would fully maintain the current rain fall regime to the trees. If that is not acceptable in the interests of safeguarding ground water quality a linear drainage system via interceptor to the combined sewer system in London Road is an alternative approach. Plans of the sewers are provided.

## 6. Location

The site is in a prime residential area, close to the town centre and local facilities. Both primary and secondary schools are close by and with pedestrian access.

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