

Proposed Development for Ark Housing Trust
at Devonshire House, 3 Bath Road, Buxton
Design and Access Statement and Heritage Statement
Apr 2016



Introduction

This design and access statement has been prepared in support of a planning application on behalf of Ark Housing Trust to High Peak Borough Council for the Change of Use of the ground floor apartment of Devonshire House into office accommodation and reinstatement of three rooflights. A Listed Building application is also submitted alongside the planning application as there are a number of minor internal alterations to the ground, 1st and 2nd floor apartments and the reinstatement of living accommodation on the 3rd floor.

1. Site Context

Devonshire House is a Grade II listed building situated on Bath Road, Buxton next to the Pavilion Gardens. Originally one large property, number 3 and 4 Bath Road have since been divided into 3 separate apartments with both period features and modern internal additions. It was built in the early 19th Century with additions in the late 19th and 20th centuries. It is located within a predominately residential area of Buxton close to local facilities such as public transport, shops, healthcare and leisure activities. The site also sits within the Buxton Central conservation area. The building is currently vacant and in need of repair.

2. Design

The proposal consists of a number of different elements and is explained as follows:

On the ground floor the proposal is for the change of use class from residential C3 into office accommodation B1 for Ark Housing Trust. The offices will be used 9am-5pm for two full time administrators and for filing and storage facilities for other non-office based charity staff. The charity itself and the staff work closely with High Peak Borough Council homelessness team, other local charities, housing associations and support networks to find housing for the most vulnerable and needy in Buxton, Matlock and surrounding areas.

The ground floor accommodation has a separate entrance from the front on Bath Road and from the rear off West Road. The ground floor will remain largely as existing with no structural alterations, retaining all existing architectural features such as doors, windows, architraves, skirtings and cornices. There will only be minor alterations to kitchen and bathroom facilities.

The first and second floor apartments will not be associated with the charity and will be suitable for let to working professionals. The first floor apartment requires some modernisation and minor alterations are proposed to form a three bedroom apartment. The second floor apartment also requires some minor alterations and modernisation. This will include the reinstatement of living accommodation on the 3rd floor which has fallen into disrepair to create a 5 bedroom duplex apartment. There are no external alterations proposed apart from the reinstatement of three rooflights.

3. Layout

The ground floor office accommodation will incorporate four offices and a reception area. The kitchen has been relocated to the centre of the building and there are additional toilet facilities fitted to the rear of the building. It is proposed that the secondary staircase to the rear of the building will be removed to allow this additional floor space to be incorporated into each apartment. The rear staircase is of poor quality and has fallen into disrepair and it has no architectural or historical merit. There is a room in the current ground floor layout that receives no natural light. The proposal will open up this space and create a useable bright reception area.



Rear stair to be removed



Ground floor room currently without natural light

All internal character features will be retained. The internal fabric of the building will remain largely as it is now and the internal fittings of the building which are not original will be updated and modernised. Most of the original fireplaces have been replaced with gas or electric fires and the kitchens and bathrooms are later additions. Any cast iron fireplaces will be retained.

The layout of the ground floor remains virtually as existing with no structural alterations. A new ceiling will be constructed where the staircase will be removed in the reception area.

The first floor apartment is accessed from the main stairwell at the front of the building and again remains largely unchanged with no structural alterations. The kitchen will be relocated into the centre of the apartment to allow a larger dining space and a bedroom created at the rear of the building in its place. The stairwell will be converted into a bedroom space with natural light and views to the rear. All existing architectural features will be retained. The windows and cladding panels to the rear stairwell are later additions and have fallen into disrepair. General maintenance will be carried out to repair them and walls to the cladding panels will be insulated to current building regulations.

The second floor apartment is also accessed via the main stairwell at the front of the building. A duplex apartment is proposed to incorporate the living accommodation on the third floor. On the second floor the duplex apartment will consist of four bedrooms and two bathrooms. The kitchen will be relocated onto the 3rd floor with a large communal dining area. The kitchen at present is small and there is no sociable space for residents. There will be an additional bedroom on the 3rd floor with a large lounge and a separate quiet study area.

A new staircase will be constructed to access the 3rd floor as the original staircase had been removed. At present the 3rd floor is partially divided into living accommodation although has not been used for a number of years and fallen into disrepair. Extensive repair works are required to the roof to keep it weather tight and preserve the structural integrity of the building at considerable cost to the building's owners. There are four existing windows in the 3rd floor to allow natural light into the apartment and it is proposed that the three rooflights that had been removed will be reinstated. Please see below photograph taken in 1984 which shows rooflights to the front elevation. It is clear to see the original positions of the rooflights from the inside of the 3rd floor space. There was also one to the rear of the building which will allow light into the proposed study room.

Reinstating the 3rd floor living accommodation and creating rooms in the stairwell will help finance the extensive repairs and renovation works required to the building.



Photograph taken in 1984 showing rooflights



Inside the third floor room as existing showing the original roof light position to the front elevation

4. Access

The application site is centrally located within easy walking distance of a broad range of local amenities in Buxton including Derby University, shops, healthcare, sports facilities and green spaces. The bus stop is located around the corner on West Road and main routes into Stockport, Macclesfield, Ashbourne and Manchester are easily accessible and the site is very easy to travel to by car, on foot or by bicycle. There is a parking space located at the rear of the building, however the intention is that the bedrooms will be let out to single people who work in the vicinity and will not need to own a vehicle due to the sustainable nature of the location. There is plenty of unrestricted on street parking nearby on Bath Road, Hartington Road and Burlington Road. It is proposed that the outbuilding to the rear of the property will be used as a secure cycle store.



Any alterations will be designed and constructed to Part M of the Building Regulations (Access to and use of Buildings). The proposal has been planned with a focus on inclusive design, providing a safe, welcoming and responsive environment where people want to live and be a part of. There is an emphasis on larger communal lounges and kitchen/ dining areas to help improve social interaction.

Careful consideration will be given to the site during the construction process to ensure site security, minimise unauthorised access and theft of materials or equipment and ensure the health and safety of neighbouring residents.

5. Heritage

Devonshire House, a grade II listed building, is a valuable asset to the character of Buxton. It is a very unusual curved building in a prominent location close to the town centre. The exterior of the building has changed minimally over the years, however the interior has seen many changes and few internal original features remain wholly intact. The planning proposal for the change of use and the listed building alterations proposed will not impact at all on the heritage asset nor its significance within the Buxton Central conservation area. The internal layout within the ground, 1st and 2nd floors will remain largely as existing with no structural changes. The building is in a state of disrepair and requires significant modernisation especially the third floor accommodation. The building is to remain as existing externally and the internal alterations proposed will have a positive impact on the listed building. There will be no removal or damage to significant original historic fabric.

The incorporation of the disused parts of the buildings i.e. the rear stairwell and the third floor accommodation will greatly improve and enhance the existing listed building. Creating larger communal spaces and improving kitchen and bathroom facilities will make the building more attractive to prospective residents and in turn will enable the property owners to fund the continued maintenance of Devonshire House which is a significant heritage asset to Buxton and to sustain an economically viable business, contributing positively to the local environment and community.

List Entry Summary

BUXTON

SK0572NW BATH ROAD 616-1/5/5 (South East side) Nos.1-6 (Consecutive) and attached walls, railings and gates

GV II

Six town houses. Early C19, with late C19 additions and C20 alterations. Coursed dressed stone with ashlar dressings, Welsh slate roofs, hipped to right, with stone coped gables and ridge stacks. EXTERIOR: all 3 storeys. Moulded eaves, 1st- and 2nd-floor bands, pilaster strips between dwellings. No.1 has a round arched doorway to right with glazed door and fanlight, above a round headed sash with keystone, above again a small sash. To the left a 3-storey canted bay window with segment-headed plain sashes and moulded cornices. No.2 has three round-headed arches with keystones and two columns between, that to the left with double glazed doors and a fanlight, the others with large windows. Above are three round headed sashes with keystones and above again three small sashes. Nos 3 & 4, originally a single house, have 6 round-headed arches with keystones with columns between, with 2 central doorways with glazed doors and 2 flanking windows. Above are 3 canted oriel windows with plain sashes topped with ornate iron grills, above again 3 plain sashes. Nos 5 & 6, each has 3 round arches with keystones with a glazed doorway and fanlight to the left and 2 sashes to the right. Each has a single 1st floor oriel with plain sashes, and above again 2 plain sashes. INTERIOR: not inspected. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached to the front are low stone walls with chamfered coping and gate piers, some with original iron railings and gates.

Listing NGR: SK0551172943

