



**Site Landscape and Visual Appraisal Study**

For  
Mr S Dobie

In respect of

Proposed Residential Development of 2no. dwellings  
on land at  
Bankwood Mill, Charlesworth, Glossop SK13 5ES

Prepared on behalf of the applicant  
by  
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## **1.0 Introduction**

1.01 The Plant Room was commissioned by the applicant, Mr Stephen Dobie, in December 2017 to provide landscape advice for the erection of two new dwellings on land at the former Bankwood Mill.

1.02 The site has an extant consent for two dwellings, planning permissions HPK2010/0396 (which has subsequently been amended via S73 HPK2017/0392) and for which a lawful development start has been made and HPK/2015/0689, which is still within its approved time frame

1.03 The client has also sought architectural and planning advice as part of the application.

1.04 The design approach has focussed on the location of the proposed dwellings within the countryside location with the intension of utilising the existing landscape setting to minimise any landscape and visual impacts the proposed development may create.

1.05 The design approach took account of the following elements:

- 2.0 General Location
- 3.0 Existing Site Land use and Character
- 4.0 Current Area Character
- 5.0 Proposed Development
- 6.0 Impact of the Development on the Character of the Existing Landscape
- 7.0 Visual Impact of the development on the surrounding area
- 8.0 Conclusion



## **2.0 General Location**

2.01 The Application site is on the eastern fringes of the village of Broadbottom in the Parish of Glossop. Although Broadbottom has close geographical links to Tameside, Greater Manchester, the site itself is within Derbyshire and is part of High Peak Borough.

2.02 The town of Glossop lies some 3km to the east, with Hyde, Greater Manchester 6km to the north west

2.03 To the south of the site runs the Glossop to Manchester railway line. The nearest railway station to the site is at Broadbottom, which is 1.0 km to the west of the site.

## **3.0 Existing Site Land use and Character**

3.01 The proposals are to provide two separate dwellings upon land that formed part of the former Bankwood Mill.

3.02 Bankwood Mill was built in the 1790s as a water-powered cotton mill, later becoming a print and dye works which closed in 1941.

3.03 Latterly the site has formed part of a chicken farm, with the original mill building becoming derelict and finally being substantially demolished in 2010. A smaller B1 / B2 unit still exists on the site.

3.04 Former chicken sheds associated with the past farm use on the site are still in situ, to the north east of the application site. These are currently utilised for a variety of non-agricultural uses.

3.05 The Application site covers an area of 0.42 hectares and is on relatively level ground approx. 110-120. AOD.

3.06 The site is accessed along a single track / access road that runs parallel with the River Etherow, accessed off Long Lane, Broadbottom. This track runs north easterly from

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the stone bridge over the River Etherow, passing under the railway viaduct and through a wooded area. On approach, to the south west of the site, is the property known as Bankwood Mill Farmhouse.

3.07 The site is accessed through an existing gated entrance.

3.08 The site is bounded to the north and west by the River Etherow , wooded and vegetated banks slope down sharply to the river below.

3.09 To the south east, the application site is adjacent to pasture land and bounded by an established native hedgerow. From here the land banks up steeply beyond.

3.10 To the north east of the application site are the former chicken sheds (4no. in total) along with an industrial unit and associated areas of mixed hard standing and rough grazing.

3.11 Beyond the former chicken sheds is a small paddock area. The River Etherow borders this area to the north. The river meanders around the site running from a westerly direction, around the paddock area, before changing course and running parallel to the application site, flowing south west towards Long Lane.

## **4.0 Current Area Character**

4.01 The site is a previously developed (brownfield) site within the Green Belt.

4.02 The Peak District National Park is approximately 3km to the east of the site .

4.03 There are no Tree Preservation Orders protecting any of the trees within the application site.

4.04 The Application site lies within the Dark Peak, according to the Landscape Character Descriptions document published by Derbyshire County Council<sup>1</sup>, an area

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classified as *'Riverside Meadows'* . This classifies its character as being *'...defined by gentle valley floors, with narrow flood plains containing meandering rivers. There is 'a strong sense of enclosure from adjacent slopes....'The fields are enclosed by thorn hedgerows and dry-stone walls'.*

4.05 It continues, *'Lanes along edges or crossing floodplains with gritstone bridges over rivers.'*

4.06 With regard to the built environment, *'....Farmsteads would have occupied higher ground to the edge of the valley.'* and *'The valleys were transformed during the industrial revolution when industrialists built large mills to harness the power of water.'*

4.07 There are three designated footpaths found in close proximity to the site:-

- A public footpath passes along the access road from Long Lane, Broadbottom towards Bankwood Mill Farmhouse where it continues south running parallel with the site, along the edge of the railway line towards Gamesley in the east.
- Two other footpaths are at a substantial distance away from the site and are on elevated land , namely:-
  - 1) Footpath along Hague Rd, some 250m distance (approx.) (also known as The Etherow Goyt Valley Way), (Tameside FP no. 101/30-101/40) to the west and north of the site, is accessed off Gorse Brow at its junction with Bank Street. This footpath runs parallel with the River Etherow on its adjacent bank elevated above the application site.
  - 2) Footpath (Tameside FP no. 88/40/88/50) to the west and north of the site, also accessed off Gorse Bank similarly runs parallel with the River Etherow on its adjacent bank, uphill from Pingott Lane (some 400m distance approx.).

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4.08 The village of Broadbottom is 600m to the west of the site, set at the base of a steep incline to the north. The Village is bounded by the River Etherow to the east.

4.09 The Glossop to Manchester railway line passes east to west / west to east, some 300m, distance on an embankment to the south of the site and across a viaduct over the River Etherow towards Broadbottom. There are no views from the railway line into the site

4.10 In line with the Landscape Type of the area<sup>1</sup> there is a '*Strong sense of enclosure from adjacent slopes.*' This can be determined here by the enclosure of the river valley created by the steep sides of the valley slopes. This is further enhanced by the dissection of areas to the south, formed by the railway embankment and viaduct.. The site itself however is more open in character.

## **5.0 Proposed Development**

5.01 The proposed development relates to the construction of two separate dwelling houses, the first a large detached dwelling with ancillary buildings in the form of stable block, garage and store. The second, smaller dwelling is a five bedroomed house with a detached garage.

5.02 The site already has extant consent for two dwellings The Planning Statement provides full details of the site's planning history, but for the purposes of this statement extant planning permissions HPK2010/0396 (which has subsequently been amended via S73 HPK2017/0392) and for which a lawful development start has been made and HPK/2015/0689, which is still within its approved time frame for implementation, are the most relevant planning history.

5.03 The proposals outlined within this report are effectively a variation (albeit through a new, full planning application) of the extant schemes approved under planning permissions HPK/2010/0396 (as amended under S73 application HPK/2017/0392) and HPK/2015/0689.

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5.04 The proposed siting of the dwellings sees the existing metalled track maintaining a similar line to that which already exists.

5.05 Planting within the curtilage of the new dwellings, and within the site, will provide additional mitigation of the development from adjacent views.

5.06 The proposed application reduces the total area of curtilage, when compared to the previous approvals..

5.07 The proposed scheme reduces the total amount of road carriage when compared with the previous approvals.

## **6.0 Impact of the Development on the Character of the Existing Landscape**

6.01 Landscape impacts are the changes in fabric, character and quality of the landscape as a result of the development.

6.02 There can be direct impacts on specific elements, or more wide scale effects on a regional or national level, whether these are acknowledged or otherwise as of special interest and/or value.

6.03 Changes to the landscape can be classed as: -

TABLE 1

**No impact;**

**Negligible**, where the change to the character is minimal;

**Low**, where the change is minor, and the underlying character of the area will be similar to pre-development conditions;

**Moderate**, where the change results in permanent loss or alteration of one or more key elements or features;

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**Major**, where the change to the area involves loss or alteration of more than one key element or feature, resulting in substantial change.

6.04 The proposals and the impact they have on the existing character of the surrounding landscape are typically drawn from by the site's baseline conditions, and are determined by field and desk analysis. In this instance the affects on landscape character of the new proposals (the re-design) are also being set against those that would occur should either of the previous approvals be fully implemented.

6.05 The landscape character of this area of High Peak is currently one of enclosed valleys with more open areas adjacent to the riverbanks. The re-design enables a more open feel to the central areas of the site maintaining the open character of the flood plain area adjacent to the riverbank.

6.06 . Previous permission HPK/2010/0396 proposed the dwelling and ancillary buildings be constructed in red brick. Whilst the existing mill building was constructed thus, it is noted that gritstone is a more typical construction material used locally elsewhere. As a result the more recent approval of HPK/2015/0689 has incorporated the use of a stone and render as building material.

6.07 The proposed development has considered these former construction material choices for the previous approvals and determined that the use of local stone for construction, slate roofing and stone walling (as opposed to red brick or render) is a more sensitive choice of materials and they will ensure that local character is more readily preserved.

6.08 The boundaries to the site are made up of existing hedgerows and trees. This will be further enhanced by additional hedgerow and tree planting which will create a dense natural buffer to the development, strengthening the existing landscape character of the surrounding area.



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6.09 Any additional planting types and species will be in line with The Landscape Character Descriptions<sup>1</sup> – Planting and Management Guidelines to ensure as little impact on the existing character of the area as possible, post development.

6.10 The proposed amended siting of the dwellings sees the existing metalled track maintaining a closer alignment to that which already exists along with a large reduction in the amount of road carriageway (of about 60m in length, some 200m<sup>2</sup> in area) compared to the extant permissions. The previous approvals both propose a total realignment of the access road with far more additional roadway than the newly proposed scheme. This approach would be more harmful to the landscape setting of this area when compared with the current application design.

6.11 The larger of the 2 dwellings has been reoriented away from the riverbank compared to the extant permissions. The current approvals do not allow for a suitable rear garden to this dwelling. Moving the built from away from the riverbank will allow for additional planting to be included to enhance and protect the sensitive riparian areas of the River Etherow. The reorientation of the dwelling will also provide an improved aspect, allowing additional sunlight into the property.

6.12 The smaller of the two dwellings is proposed to be relocated to the southern boundary of the site, away from the central areas that the previous permission proposed. This will allow for the opening up of the central part of the site creating greater separation between each property. The provision of a more open, central area will enable additional planting to be proposed that will allow for the breaking up and soften of the proposed mass of the built form.

6.13 The proposed re-location of the second dwelling at the southern edge of the site, also reflects the landscape character type of the area (4.06) with the building being tucked in to the edge of the valley sides and being adjacent to the existing established hedgerow, providing additional valuable screening from adjacent areas.

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6.14 The second property will also create an alignment along the valley side with the adjacent Bankwood Mill Farm, which will be of benefit in landscape terms. The previous permission made no reference to either the landscape character type or its relation to the existing landscape framework.

6.15 The current proposals strive to maintain the existing character of the area by the choice of vernacular materials and the more sensitive approach to the positioning of the built form than from the previous extant permissions. The proposals also intend to bolster existing character through the addition of further native tree and shrub planting.

6.16 The changes brought about should either of the extant permissions be fully implemented would have a less positive impact on the character of the existing area than the re-design. The extant schemes fail to successfully recognise the character of the existing area in the way that the current proposals do.

6.17 Following construction, the effects on the character of the area are in line with Table 1 in that the character of the overall area will be similar to that which exists at present. Any changes to the landscape can be deemed as **Low**, in accordance with the above criteria.

## **7.0 Visual Impact of the development on the surrounding area**

7.01 Visual impact relates to the changes in available views and the effects of those changes on people.

7.02 It is concerned with the direct impact of the development upon the view through intrusion or obstruction and the reaction of the viewer who may be affected.

7.03 Visual impact also questions the loss or otherwise of visual amenity created by the proposals.



7.04 The quality of current views of the site should be compared with those that will occur following implementation of the proposals.

7.05 The proposals and the impact they have on current views, like landscape character, are typically drawn from by the site's baseline conditions, and are determined by field analysis. In this instance the affects caused by any likely visual changes brought about by the new proposals (the re-design) are also being set against those that would occur should either of the extant permission be fully implemented.

7.06 From this assessment the degree of visual change can be ascertained, analysis of the magnitude and importance of visual impacts can be assessed as:-

TABLE 2

**Negligible**, where the application site occupies only a small fraction of the overall field of view, and is at a considerable distance from the viewpoint, or where the sensitivity of the receptor is low;

**Low**, where only a minor portion of the view changes for a short duration or where the sensitivity of the receptor is low;

**Moderate**, where some changes occur with the view, but not for a substantial length of time, or not in a substantial part of the view, and the sensitivity of the receptor is medium;

**Major**, where the view substantially alters the overall view and the sensitivity of the receptor is high, or is in close proximity to the development.

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7.07 Views from the surrounding footpaths currently into the site are of derelict, decrepit buildings and run-down workshops etc. In line with the character of the area<sup>1</sup>, mills are a common site within this part of Derbyshire but in its current derelict state the existing baseline views have a negative impact on visual amenity of the area. Any changes to the views from the proposed development will lead to a **positive change to the current views** for receptors using the local footpath networks.

7.08 Broken views of the proposals will be possible from the footpaths on the opposite side of the river valley, looking south east across the site. These views are obscured in part by the elevated landform at this point. This means that any receptors at this point have their view obscured in part by existing hedgerows and trees on the river valley sides and in the foreground. The footpaths are also at a considerable distance from the site so only a small fraction of the overall field of view is taken up by the site.

7.09 With the provision of additional planting works, as part of the application, along with the careful siting of the dwellings (and their ancillary buildings) this will further restrict the already broken and distant views from the opposite valley towards the site. As a result (in line with Table 1) the impact of the development on the receptor at these points would be **negligible**.

7.10 Views of the site are possible from the adjacent public footpath to the south of the site, however in general landform, distance and existing vegetation obscure most of the scheme. For a short length of footpath the site is clearly visible, but the latest proposals provide an improved outlook on those of the two previous approvals. The proposed widening of the distance between the two dwellings will allow for additional planting within the site to mitigate the proposals and providing a more sympathetic approach to this sensitive landscape setting.

7.11 Additional gapping up of existing hedgerows and the provision of additional tree planting within and to the boundaries of the site will ensure that views through and into

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the site will be further obscured. It can be noted that the view will alter for any receptor using the footpath at this point. The magnitude and importance of the change although great will be of a positive benefit compared to baseline conditions. The sensitive landscape design and thoughtful positioning of built form proposed will lessen any sensitivity the receptor has to the new dwellings when viewed from this point. To conclude the affects of the new view on the receptor at this point will be **negligible** (in accordance with the above table)

7.12 Views of built form from surrounding areas in either of the extant permissions would be limited in the same way as the re-design by the self same existing landform and vegetation. However the most recent proposals have ensured that the mass of the building has been broken up by the orientation of the built form. The new design also utilises less curtilage, has a reduced footprint and is smaller in volume than both extant permissions. These amendments to the extant permission have ensured that the current proposals have even less impact on receptors when viewing the development from surrounding areas.

7.13 The new proposals will ensure that additional tree and shrub planting is incorporated within the application site so that the proposed dwellings are anchored into the site more effectively. This approach will ensure that the proposals have a **more positive impact** than either of the extant permissions on the views of the site from surrounding areas.

## 8.0 Conclusion

8.01 The proposals illustrate the approach the client has adopted to the proposed development of the site.. It demonstrates their commitment to establishing an appropriate scheme within a high-quality setting.

8.02 The proposals take into account the character and setting of the area through appropriate choices of building materials, style and placement of buildings.

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8.03 The design principles that have been adopted here serve to achieve the following goals: –

- To ensure that the proposed development is integrated into the existing landscape through the careful positioning of the proposed dwellings and their curtilages to ensure openness is maintained;
- To ensure that local character is recognised by the proposed sensitive use of vernacular building style and materials;
- To ensure the retention, restoration and management of existing trees, shrubs and hedgerows within the site;
- To create a transition from the development footprint into the surrounding countryside;
- To positively enhance and diversify the existing landscape character within the site and its surroundings.

8.04 These intentions will ensure that: \_

- The implementation of the development proposals will have limited detrimental effect upon the landscape setting and character of the site and will have lesser impact compared to both the extant schemes;
- The implementation of the development proposals will have limited detrimental effect upon the landscape setting and character of the surrounding area and will have a lesser impact compared to the extant schemes;
- That the proposals being put forward for the erection of 2no. dwellings, and recommendations for additional soft landscaping, are carefully considered so as to ensure that any visual impact caused by the development will not have a negative impact upon the site or it's surrounding area. Indeed, the proposals will have a **more positive**

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impact on a receptor of the current site views from the surrounding footpaths and also compared to views which would be created by either of the extant schemes;

## References

- <sup>1</sup> Landscape Character Descriptions:1. Dark Peak – Pub. Derbyshire County Council

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