

Mr John Williamson
High Peak Borough Council - Planning
Buxton Town Hall
Market Place
Buxton
Derbyshire
SK17 6EL

1 – 4 South Park Court
Hobson Street
Macclesfield
Cheshire
SK11 8BS

T: 01625 433881
F: 01625 511457

info@emeryplanning.com
www.emeryplanning.com

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John Coxon
T: 01625 442 785
johncoxon@emeryplanning.com

By e-mail only: John.Williamson@highpeak.gov.uk

Dear John

Re: Planning application HPK/2017/0691 – Revised plans and scale / volume calculations

Please accept our apologies for the delay in providing you with this additional information. As discussed on Thursday, the revised plans and volumetric assessments took much longer to prepare than originally anticipated. The following information is hereby enclosed:

- revised plans and elevations for the main dwelling and outbuildings;
- 3D volumetric assessments of the existing building & implemented planning permission (HPK/2017/0392) and the revised application scheme; and,
- additional supporting information / calculations.

Revised plans

The revised plans seek to address the comments in your e-mail of the 15th March in relation to the proposed development, particularly to reduce the 'dominance' of the main dwelling and its outbuildings. Specifically, the changes provided address your comments in turn as follows:

1. Please refer to enclosed calculation sheet;
2. There is additional usable roof space in the new proposed scheme. This now makes the new proposed scheme 2.5 storeys high. The implemented / extant scheme has always been 3 storeys high; and now 3.5 storeys following the Section 73 approval, and is therefore

a full storey higher as well as being higher in physical height). The lower part of this main building is not 4.5 metres high, but is 6.5 metres to the ridge and 2.5 storeys with roof lights. In relation to 'dominance' the applicant has made the following amendments:

- Removal of parapets from east and west gables
- Removal of rear roof gable (to clarify, it is not a dormer)
- Removal of stone ball design from parapets bases
- Reduction in quoin density
- Change from a gable roof to a hip roof
- Simplification of western gable end from 5 windows and a door to 4 windows and a dormer
- Removal of rear conservatory
- Reduction in height of kitchen wing and removal of parapet walls
- Ridge on front gable lowered below main ridge

With regard to the matter of dominance, it is very important to note that the size of the extant scheme is higher than the proposed scheme. It contains 3.5 floors compared to 2.5 floors, is made from red engineering brick, compared to proposed natural stone and is at best a converted industrial building, compared to a well designed and proportioned typical Georgian style house. As such, the existing building and outbuildings dominate the existing setting far more than the proposed buildings. Any increase in design features comes merely from creating a good Georgian design. In terms of the local context, we also note that the adjacent existing dwelling to the south-west of the site is a substantial building of 3 storeys in height. Moreover, we have lessened and amended the scheme significantly to address your concerns.

3. The stables have been reduced down from 6.7m to 4.75 m high, with a small area at 5.25m over the drive under aspect of the building.
4. Noted and done. Furthermore although not requested, we have also reduced the height of the second house garage from 5m to 4.5m.
5. The parapets have been removed as requested – see 1 above
6. The front gable has been reduced, as requested.
7. Rear dormer is a rear gable and has been removed.
8. Please see the further land holding edged blue and position of paddocks. The location of the proposed stables provides ideal access to these paddocks

As you can see, we have listened to your concerns and sought significantly to address them whilst still retaining the architectural design quality and integrity of the proposal. We trust that this has now been achieved.

Updated calculations including volume

As previously mentioned, our calculations for the implemented planning permission include measurements for the existing buildings (which are to be converted) based upon recent site surveys. This includes a notable fall in levels to the rear of the building, whereas the approved plans only show the level taken from the flat levels of the internal courtyard. Clearly the assessment should factor in the scale of the existing buildings to be converted. The new measurements have been taken by our client. Although the Council will already be very familiar with the buildings having previously determined a number of applications on the site, if required we would be happy to meet you on site to verify the calculations relating to the existing buildings.

The 3D models accurately measure volume. They have been prepared at significant expense to our client. As we have set out our client's intention to build out the already implemented part-conversion scheme (HPK/2017/0392) over the new build approval (HPK/2015/0689), the latter has not been modelled.

Our client's architect has also utilised the modelling to provide a useful table which compares some additional categories of relevance between HPK/2017/0392 and the proposed development, namely the average height of buildings, the volume and footprint of buildings of 2 storeys or more, and size of usable attic space within the main houses of both schemes. These are important considerations in the assessment of openness, as set out in further detail below, and contribute to enhancing the sense of openness through the site in comparison to the extant and implemented planning permission.

You will note there are reductions in almost all categories:

- Overall height reduced;
- Average height reduced;
- Number of stories reduced;
- Overall volume reduced;
- Volume of buildings 2 storeys or more reduced;
- Floor space reduced;
- Curtilage reduced; and
- Footprint increased, but to allow for lower outbuildings to increase sense of openness throughout the site.

Impact upon the openness of the Green Belt

The key consideration in this case is whether or not the impact upon openness is greater than the extant development.

In the case of *John Turner v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government & East Dorset Council* [2016] EWCA Civ 466 ("Turner") openness in this context is more than simply an absence of buildings. The Judgment stated at paragraph 14:

"The word "openness" is open-textured and a number of factors are capable of being relevant when it comes to applying it to the particular facts of a specific case. Prominent among these will be factors relevant to how built up the Green Belt is now and how built up it would be if redevelopment occurs (in the context of which, volumetric matters may be a material concern, but are by no means the only one) and factors relevant to the visual impact on the aspect of openness which the Green Belt presents."

As a result of the above Judgment there has been a shift in the approach that should be taken in assessing the impact of proposed development on the openness of the Green Belt. Where an assessment is made a two-fold approach should be taken to consider both the change in amount (our emphasis) of built development on the site and the visual increase or decrease in openness. The Judgment and appeal decisions that have followed indicate that the following approach should be taken in assessing the impact on openness of the Green Belt:

- (1) The differences in the actual physical size of a development should be considered. If there is an increase in the amount of built development, it would follow that this would result in a loss of openness;
- (2) An assessment should be made as to whether the proposed development would result in a perceived visual loss of openness. This assessment should not merely be assessing

whether the proposed development simply looks larger than the existing built development. It should assess whether views through the site are increased or reduced and should consider whether the visual character of the site has been changed. Does the site appear more “built up” than previously.

Finally, following the two stages above, consideration should then be given to whether there are any very special circumstances that would outweigh any harm to the Green Belt by way of inappropriateness and loss of openness.

In terms of the proposed development, our interpretation of the various tables indicates that there are reductions in almost all categories when compared the implemented planning permission, including maximum height, volume and floorspace.

Therefore in terms of the first part of the assessment of the impact upon openness, the physical size of the proposed development in comparison to the extant planning permission is considered to be positive in overall terms.

The second part of the assessment is then to assess whether the proposed development would result in a perceived visual loss of openness.

In this regard it should be noted that the main mill building to be converted also includes significant brick elevations above ground level to the north and east elevations, where the levels drop. These are shown as dashed lines on the 3D model. The main dwelling under the extant and implemented development would appear as approximately 14m high to the rear, and would be particularly prominent in views from the north-west, and the public footpath which runs to the south of Hague Road. The approved main dwelling would appear as a very substantial building from these viewpoints. Consideration must therefore be given to this factor in the overall consideration of the proposals, as it effectively appears visually as a substantial part of the building above ground level.

You will recall that a landscape statement is also provided in support of this application, which considers the way the proposed re-siting of the two dwellings is set within the existing landscape. The contents of the statement have been assessed by the Council's consultee, and as far as we are aware are not disputed by the Council. The report concludes that the implementation of the development proposals will have a positive effect upon the landscape setting and character of the site and the surrounding area, and will have less visual impact compared to both the extant schemes. In particular:

- 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. The site would appear as substantially less built up than the extant and implemented scheme.
- The proposed re-location of the second dwelling at the southern edge of the site tucks the building into the edge of the valley sides and being adjacent to the existing established hedgerow, providing additional valuable screening from adjacent areas and improving the perception of openness from the surrounding countryside.
- The proposed main dwelling has been reoriented away from the riverbank compared to the extant permissions, improving openness to the river corridor. The extant approvals do not allow for a suitable rear garden (with associated screening) 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 elegant conservatory and kitchen wing to the main dwelling significantly breaks up the massing in comparison to the implemented scheme.

- 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.
- The proposed adjustment to the access road layout will reduce the amount of road / hard standing associated with the proposed development.
- The reductions in overall height average height and the amount of 2 storey development volume all contribute to enhancing the sense of openness through the site.

You have raised concerns in relation to the height of the main dwelling. The amendments would reduce the massing of the building through the introduction of a hip roof, a reduction in the height of the front gable and the removal of the parapets. It should also be noted that the implemented planning permission features a main dwelling of 3.5 storeys, whereas this application comprises a dwelling of 2.5 storeys. Furthermore there would be reductions in the average height of buildings across the development and the volume and footprint of buildings of 2 storeys or more.

Overall the result is a reduced impact on openness than the extant planning permission and an improved relationship to the landscape setting, providing a quality landscape which recognises and also contributes to the sense of openness of the countryside and Green Belt at this location.

In terms of the visual impact on openness, the proposed development would not be viewed as being more "built-up" than it does under the either permitted scheme (HPK/2017/0392 or HPK/2015/0689), and critically views through the site, and along the river corridor, would be increased. We consider that the sense of openness would be improved.

Therefore in overall terms, we consider that there would be an improvement to the openness of the Green Belt for the proposed development when compared to either extant approval, but in particular the implemented development (HPK/2017/0392).

Design

The design issues that you have raised principally relate to the scale of the proposed development, which we have sought to address above and through the revisions to the proposed development.

The proposals have been designed to reflect a Georgian country house, which is not uncommon across Derbyshire. Whilst the regimented and symmetrical windows could be described as 'dominant', but this is a fundamental feature of the design style and can instantly be recognised as classic Georgian architecture. Dormer windows are also synonymous with this type of property and are prevalent throughout Derbyshire.

The proposed development would utilise appropriate materials, including natural slate and stone, rather than bricks. The implemented planning permission involves the conversion of a former industrial mill, which required the use of red brick elevations, and severely limited the design of the scheme and resulted in a development of much lesser architectural merit, not in keeping the traditional architecture which characterises the local area and would adversely the site accordingly.

To conclude, our client has listened to your initial concerns and has made a number of amendments to the scheme to address them. We consider that the additional information supports our view that there would no greater impact upon openness than the extant and implemented planning permission; in fact we consider that there would be an overall increase in all aspects of openness. Furthermore the proposed development represents a high quality design which would sit well within its rural context, and would be a significant improvement over the extant scheme which in design terms can only ever be a converted industrial building.

We therefore trust that the additional information is sufficient for you to approve the application. However should you have any outstanding concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us so that we can consider them and respond accordingly. We appreciate the feedback provided to date and hope that it enables our client to finally be in a position to restore this derelict, previously developed site.

Yours sincerely
Emery Planning

John Coxon BSc (Hons), MRTPI
Associate Director

Enc: Proposed plans (revised)
3D volume calculations – Existing building & extant and implemented conversion scheme
3D volume calculations – Revised proposals
Additional supporting information prepared by CBD