

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

HPK/2021/0034
Valid 10/02/2021

WINGFIELD BINGS ROAD
WHALEY BRIDGE

REFURBISHMENT OF A TWO-BEDROOM BUNGALOW WITH EXISTING BASEMENT TO CREATE A FOUR-BEDROOM HOUSE AND SEPARATE DOUBLE GARAGE WITH GREEN ROOF, ASSOCIATED HARD AND SOFT LANDSCAPING WORKS.

(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)

MAIN ISSUES

- Design and Conservation
- Amenity
- Parking Provision and Highway Safety

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application relates to 'Wingfield'; a detached split level two bedroom bungalow finished in a brown render with tiled roof, situated in a relatively large plot north of Bings Road accessed via a private driveway.

The land falls sharply away to the west beyond the side and rear garden, with the private driveway siting to the south. The property is orientated with each gable facing north and south, and made up of a basement below the finished ground floor level.

The site lies within the built-up area boundary of Whaley Bridge and within the Whaley Bridge Conservation Area. The northern boundary is shared with open agricultural land with residential properties sharing boundaries on three sides. To the east is the converted Chapel named 'Spire House whilst to the south west are two cottages No.2 and No.42 Old Turns Cottage, both of which are Grade II Listed. To the west stands No.36 Old Road, which forms the end of a row of stone terraces which progress northwards downhill towards the town centre.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks permission for various extensions alterations and domestic development to and within the curtilage of the property which comprises the following aspects of development:

- Conversion of existing basement to living accommodation
- Insertion of dormer windows

- Erection of detached garage with green roof
- Associated hard and soft landscaping works

Owing to comments and concerns from Officers regarding the design and appearance of the proposed development and its impacts on the wider conservation area, a set of revised plans has been submitted for consideration which are the subject of assessment within this report.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004 requires proposals to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan taking into consideration any material considerations relevant to the determination of the application.

The Local Development Plan for this site comprises the High Peak Local Plan (2016). Adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance documents and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are also material considerations in determining applications.

High Peak Local Plan 2016

- S1 Sustainable Development Principles
- S1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- S2 Settlement Hierarchy
- S6 Central Sub-area Strategy
- EQ6 Design and Place Making
- EQ7 Built and Historic Environment
- CF6 Accessibility and Transport

National Planning Policy Framework 2019

Achieving Sustainable Development	Chapter 2
Promoting Sustainable Transport	Chapter 9
Achieving Well Designed Places	Chapter 12
Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment	Chapter 16

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

None

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 20th April 2021
 Neighbour consultation period ends: 11th March 2021
 Press Advert: 18th March 2021

Public Comments

None

Town / Parish Comments

No comments received

HPBC Conservation Officer

Initial Response:

A small rendered bungalow, with part-basement set into a steeply sloping hillside. The only openings to the basement are a window and door in the southern gable. Views of the property are gained from the drive on Bings Road and more distant views from across the valley including from Orchard Road where the roof of the building can be viewed in conjunction with 19th century terraced houses below. Views of the property within the Conservation Area are not assessed in the heritage appraisal.

The application proposes excavating the western bankside to fully expose the basement across the whole of the building footprint, to extend into the attic and add a large gable extension to the roof and smaller dormer, again to the western (front elevation). A large central rooflight is to be added to the western roof slope and further rooflights to the rear. Additional windows are to be added in the attic of both gable ends.

Whilst the building is not prominently sited in the Conservation Area the gable is visible from Bings road and the addition of the gable dormer to the roof will be prominent and a discordant element to the outline of the building in contrast with the form and design of traditional buildings nearby. The smaller dormer, large rooflight and dramatic design changes to the front will also be inappropriate in the context of the surrounding built character. The overall design, including the design, proportion and spacing of windows is incongruous and out of place in this Conservation Area.

Less than substantial harm to character and appearance which is a significant planning objection.

Further Response:

I definitely agree that in design terms rooflights would be an improvement but if you can't see them (the dormers) from anywhere then it would be difficult to defend refusal (based on good design and impact on the character and appearance of the area).

The proposal would result in a significant change to the elevation overlooking the valley and rooflights are not part of local building tradition.

As you have seen the site you are probably best placed to take a view on this.

Derbyshire County Council Highways

No objections subject to applicant demonstrating adequate off-street parking provision which allows vehicles to exit the site in a forward gear

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

The application seeks extensions and alterations to an existing residential dwelling that lies within the built-up area boundary of Whaley Bridge; one of the larger Market Towns that sit at the top of the settlement hierarchy and are identified as the focus for housing and economic growth under Local Plan (LP) Policy S2.

The site also lies within the Whaley Bridge Conservation Area and therefore the application is also subject to LP Policy EQ7 and restrictive national planning policies relating to heritage conservation set out under Chapter 16 of the NPPF, underpinned by Section 72(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The principle of development can thus only be supported where the application is judged to comply with such restrictive policies and preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the building and wider conservation area, notwithstanding any other relevant material considerations.

Design and Conservation

LP Policy S1 sets out a number of sustainability principles which all new development proposals should incorporate in order to make a positive contribution towards the sustainability of communities and to protect, and where possible enhance the environment.

LP Policy EQ6 states that all development should be well designed to respect and contribute positively to the character, identity and context of High Peak's townscapes, in terms of scale, height, density, and layout.

LP Policy EQ7 has regard to the Built and Historic Environment. It states that the Council will conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. This will take into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing their significance and will ensure that development proposals contribute positively to the character of the built and historic environment.

The High Peak Residential Design Guide SPD (2005) and more recently adopted Design Guide SPD (2018) contains further design guidance for extending and altering residential properties, particularly in sensitive areas including conservation areas. The guidance states that alterations need to be undertaken with care, with the aim being to revitalise the building without altering its fundamental character.

The guidance also refers to new garages, and states that they should be designed and built in sympathy with the properties they serve. Materials and roof pitch should

generally match those of the parent building, with a separate garage preferred to one connected with the main house. Flat roofs should be avoided due to their unsympathetic squat and ungainly appearance and the prevailing climate and ongoing maintenance problems.

Paragraph 127 of the NPPF states amongst other things that decisions should ensure that developments will add to the overall quality of the area; are visually attractive as a result of good architecture; and are sympathetic to the surrounding built environment.

Paragraphs 193-196 of the NPPF set out how a Local Planning Authority should assess the significance of a heritage asset and assess the potential impact of a development upon that asset. Where a proposal will lead to substantial harm or total loss of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent unless there are substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits.

The existing property is split level and finished in a rather unsympathetic dark peddledash render located in a relatively spacious plot at the eastern fringes of the Whaley Bridge Conservation Area. Due to the topography of the site and surrounding area, and the existing hard and soft landscaping, public views of the site are extremely limited with intermittent long distance views restricted to the other side of the valley approximately 1km to the west. This part of the Conservation Area has a varied character, with a mixture of terraced, semi-detached and detached properties all with different architectural styles and finishes. Dormer windows, whilst not present in the immediate vicinity, are common in Whaley Bridge, as evidenced by the applicant in a supporting email.

The conversion of the basement to provide additional living accommodation does not require planning permission in its own right owing to the lack of any physical external changes and is therefore supported. However, the plans submitted in their original form raised concerns from Officers in connection with the design and appearance of the dormers and proposed introduction of timber cladding. The dormers as submitted were disproportionate to each other and were considered to contribute negatively to the overall character and appearance of the building and to some degree the wider Conservation Area.

Having regard to the plans as submitted, the applicant was advised to omit the dormer windows to allow the application to be supported. Revised plans were subsequently received which showed a reduction to the scale of the main dormer to have a matching pair of dormers on the rear roof slope. The agent has also commented that the roof light can be of traditional conservation style which will help to enhance the overall appearance of the building. The suite of revised plans also contains a materials schedule.

It is considered that when taking into account the low visual aesthetics of the existing building, the enclosed nature of the site and that public views are restricted to glimpsed long distance views from across the valley, the plans in their revised form

will result in modest visual enhancement of the property and will preserve the overall character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The plans also contain the proposed erection of a double detached garage with a flat roof covered by sedum grass to the east of the building, constructed from a natural stone, that has been designed to fit neatly in to the existing topography. The garage is single storey and reads as a subordinate and secondary structure comparable to the main house and is considered to be of an appropriate scale and height.

With regards to its form and appearance, in the majority of cases, flat roofs are not supported in the High Peak due to their unsympathetic appearance and issues relating to maintenance. However, given that the external walls are constructed of a high quality stone, and when taking into account the existing topography and lack of views from the public highway, it is considered that in this particular instance, the proposed design is appropriate for its context and would not result in any harm to the character and appearance of the site, the wider street scene, or the Whaley Bridge Conservation Area.

Having regard to the above analysis, and subject to appropriate conditions, the application in its final revised form is considered to comply with Local Plan Policies S1, EQ6 and EQ7, relevant Supplementary Design Guidance, relevant paragraphs under Chapters 12 and 16 of the NPPF, and Section 72 of the Act 1990.

Amenity

LP Policy EQ6 requires all new development to have a satisfactory relationship with existing land and buildings and protects the amenity of the area, which includes residential amenity of neighbouring properties. Aspects of residential amenity include impacts such as a loss of sunlight, overshadowing and overbearing impacts, loss of outlook, and loss of privacy.

The High Peak Residential Design Guide SPD requires extensions and alterations to preserve the residential amenity of neighbouring properties having regard to the relationship between existing and proposed development, the positioning of habitable windows, and changes in land levels. Habitable windows should maintain a separation distance of 21m.

Paragraph 127 of the NPPF states that planning should create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

‘Wingfield’ is situated in a relatively large plot bounded on all sides by semi-mature vegetation. The eastern boundary is shared with ‘Spire House’ a converted former Chapel. Given that no physical extensions are proposed to the main house on the eastern elevation and that the only fenestration proposed is rooflights, it is considered that the application will not give rise to any adverse impacts to the residential amenity of this neighbouring property.

Beyond the western boundary on lower ground is a row of terraced properties on Old Road, which stand approximately 26m distant, with a large hedgerow defining the boundary. Given the nature of the proposed development, the intermittent

topography and distance between existing and proposed development, it is not considered that the proposed development will give rise to any harm to any residential property beyond the western boundary of the site.

Similarly, the nearest property to the south stands some 28m distant from the property and as such is not considered to be adversely affected by the proposals.

Having regard to the above analysis, it is considered that the proposals in their revised form will not give rise to any adverse impacts to the amenity of any neighbouring properties, in line with Local Plan Policy EQ6, the High Peak Residential Design Guide SPD, and paragraph 127 of the NPPF.

Highway Safety

LP Policy CF6 seeks to ensure that development can be safely accessed in a sustainable manner and that all new development is located where it can be satisfactorily accommodated within the existing highway network and that a satisfactory level of off-street parking provision is provided in line with guidelines set out under Appendix 1 of the Local Plan.

Paragraph 108 of the NPPF states that in assessing applications for development, it should be ensured that safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users.

The application seeks consent for the expansion of the existing dwelling which would result in a total of three bedrooms, which in line with parking guidelines, requires the applicant to provide a minimum of 2 x off-street parking spaces within the domestic curtilage.

The property benefits from a private driveway that will be modified as a result of the proposed development by way of hard and soft landscaping to facilitate a more effective turning area. The proposed garage has been modified within the revised plans to ensure that it complies with minimum dimensions (5.5m x 2.4m) and therefore in its revised form, the application is not considered to result in any harm to highway safety, in line with LP Policy CF6 and paragraph 108 of the NPPF.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

LP Policy S1a reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Paragraph 11 of the NPPF sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking, this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or, where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission, unless:

- the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

- any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

The application seeks permission of extensions and alterations to an existing property together with ancillary domestic development and hard and soft landscaping within its curtilage, on a site that lies within the built-up area boundary of Whaley Bridge and within the Conservation Area. The application is thus subject to restrictive policies relating to heritage conservation contained under Chapter 16 of the NPPF underpinned by Section 72 of the Act 1990.

Following constructive dialogue with the applicant's agent, the application has been found to address initial concerns in connection with the design and visual appearance of the proposals and in its revised form is considered to preserve and to some degree enhance the overall character and appearance of the building, the street scene, and wider conservation area, thereby demonstrating compliance with LP Policies S1, EQ6 and EQ7, relevant Supplementary Design Guidance, restrictive policies under Chapter 16 of the NPPF and Section 72 of the Act 1990.

The application has been found to preserve the residential amenity of neighbouring properties and would not result in any adverse highway safety impacts.

Therefore the application in its revised form is considered to constitute a sustainable form of development and in line with LP Policy S1a and paragraph 11 of the NPPF is recommended for approval subject to appropriate conditions.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : Approve with Conditions

Case Officer: James Stannard

Recommendation Date: 22nd June 2021

X 

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of High Peak Borough Council