

Overstone
8 Robertson Road
Buxton
SK17 9DY

Case Officer
Planning Department
High Peak Borough Council
Buxton
SK17 1AQ

23rd January 2023

Consultation on Planning Application

Application Number: HPK/2022/0563

Applicant's Name: Smith

Location: 10 Robertson Road

Dear Sir or Madam,

We have looked carefully at the above revised planning application.

Subject to your Committee's approval, we would have no objection to the proposed extension to the existing house, providing that, in the words of this revised plan, "all materials to match existing building" is taken to mean natural stone and to exclude the use of reconstituted stone, stone cladding or stone facing tiles. We also have no objection to the proposed modification to widen the driveway.

Our comments relate to the proposed ancillary accommodation as detailed in the proposal.

We were disappointed to hear the full details of the original proposed ancillary accommodation. In our brief conversation with Mrs Smith, we were informed that the replacement to the existing outbuilding (the building to be demolished) would be bigger, but we were given no idea of how much bigger. There was also a fleeting reference to the possibility of a future change of use from a study/gym to accommodation for the occupant's parents. No other details were forthcoming. The revised proposal relating to the ancillary building involves a slight reduction in its length and height. We are of the opinion that the revised proposal is still too large in all its proportions.

We have considerable concerns about this proposed structure.

The revised plans still appear to contain considerable inconsistencies regarding measurements, as well as some mix-up with north/south elevations, which we hope can be addressed before the plans reach the determination process. The comments we would like to submit are as follows.

Comments - Plans

- We are concerned about the proposed length and height. The proposed ancillary building appears to be, in the revised plans, still approximately 10 metres in length, which is longer than many detached bungalows. The proposed structure is several times larger than the outhouse it would be replacing, and it seems to us that the plan view in the revised application exaggerates the size of the existing outbuilding relative to the proposed new structure. In doing so this plan view appears to unduly minimise the size of the proposed new structure.

We therefore are of the opinion that the revised application continues, by virtue of its size and scale, to constitute an overdevelopment of the site, with its consequential impact on the amenity value of neighbouring buildings and its significant overshadowing of our property, together with a detrimental impact upon our outlook.

- The proposed building is angled differently from the existing outhouse and appears to run remarkably close to and parallel to the boundary/retaining wall. From the plan it remains difficult to gauge the distance between the proposed structure and the existing stone boundary/retaining wall. Indeed, if anything, it seems to be even closer to the boundary wall than in the initial application, though again it is impossible to be certain from the plan. This again raises the question for us about the danger that digging the foundation of the proposed structure could damage the stone boundary/retaining wall. The existing outhouse appears to sit on foundations which are above ground level, possibly for this reason? Also, would there be sufficient space to carry out maintenance work between the proposed structure and the boundary wall in the future, should it be required?
- With a ridge height of 5 to 5.5 metres and with the difference between the levels of the garden of No. 10 Robertson Road and our garden, the overshadowing of our garden would remain very considerable, with a direct impact on its amenity value. Using the 'Sun Calc' app, we estimate that during the winter months the proposed structure would cast a shadow of approximately 23.14 metres, which would block considerable light from the ground floor windows running along the side of our property. Most of our windows are at the side of the property which would look directly towards the proposed structure.
- **Drawing number: 7029 – PL10, proposed elevations.** It appears that in this drawing elevations north and south are the wrong way round, as can be seen from the slope of the land. Furthermore, "the indicative height of the boundary wall" is incorrectly specified since the boundary wall as it exists slopes down markedly to the bottom of the garden, whereas in the drawing it appears to be horizontal with the eaves of the building. Indeed, this drawing seems to show the (incorrectly horizontal) indicative height of the boundary wall even higher than it was on the initial drawing. We really need to stress that the actual (sloping) boundary wall is very much lower in relation to the height of the proposed ancillary building than is shown in the drawing. The consequence of this is that the elevations of the proposed building will be considerably higher relative to the boundary wall than they appear, especially at the west (College Road) end.
- Indeed, this raises the further point that, because we are not sure that the drawings show accurately the actual slope downwards of the land towards the bottom (College Road) end of the garden, we would suggest the need for a precise and

accurate examination of the sight levels by a surveyor. Furthermore, this survey would need to be in conjunction with the different slopes of No.8 and No. 10 Robertson Road at the corresponding point, this having a bearing on the overshadowing issue. Without a precise survey, it seems to us impossible to determine the height of the west end of the proposed structure relative to the east end.

- With regard to the conservation area, the proposed structure clearly obstructs the glimpses between the buildings when walking on either Robertson Road or College Road, glimpses which are mentioned in the conservation officer's report on the initial planning application. This proposed structure would constitute a singularly prominent obstruction to the spacious and open views which have been identified as characteristic of this part of the conservation area.
- We have read the unmapped sewers documentation submitted by Severn Trent Water, but do not understand its significance. We have concerns about sewerage and rainwater drainage which are not explained in the drawings provided. We are also concerned that the space between the proposed structure and the boundary/retaining wall is insufficient for the dispersal of rainwater by whatever means.

Comments – Heritage Statement submitted by Smashbox Architecture.

- The Statement claims that *"Properties along Robertson Road are mainly 20th Century"*
We do not believe this to be true. It is our belief that most of the houses in the road were built between about 1880 and 1899. We also believe this to be true of the houses overlooking this proposed development from College Road and Green Lane. There are five 1920's/30's properties in Robertson Road, two pairs of semis and one detached house.
- The statement claims that *"10 Robertson Road has some individual historical significance to the conservation area ... [but that] The architectural significance has been somewhat eroded by additions approved in the past"*.
However, we have been told that there have been no modifications or additions to the building since it was built, and visual evidence confirms this. The room over the garage and the outhouse are part of the original construction (requested by the first owners) and are therefore totally in keeping with the rest of the property. The adjoining semi (no. 12) has been extended since it was originally built, but we think no. 10 was the larger property of the two when constructed.
- The statement claims *"The proposals are residential in character"*
The proposals are indeed residential in character, but in constituting a building providing accommodation separate to the main dwelling this is at odds with the general character of the conservation area. It is also at variance with the conservation area's general characteristics of spacious gardens and the provision of glimpses between Robertson Road and College Road as they are traversed.
- The statement claims that *"In terms of longer views around the conservation area ... [the proposal] will have neutral impact"*.
The large, proposed detached dwelling would be seen from several angles and would be visible from both Robertson Road and College Road.

- The resubmitted Heritage statement argues that *“The outbuilding is set back from the front elevation and any impacts are limited to the immediate context”* (It should be noticed however that the revised plans involve moving the outbuilding forward slightly and therefore making it more visible in Robertson Road than was the case with the initial plans). The immediate context is indeed the conservation area itself as viewed from the backs of the properties on Robertson Road and College Road. The impact on our property would be considerable in this respect.

To summarise, we would prefer this proposed structure not to be built due to the length and height of the building, together with its overbearing and overshadowing impact upon our own property and upon the neighbouring properties. Such a large building set amidst the spacious gardens and open views between Robertson Road and College Road would not appear to be in sympathy with the character of the conservation area.

Yours faithfully,

Dr and Mrs A J Marrison