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**Planning Department
High Peak Borough Council
Town Hall
Buxton
Derbyshire SK17 1AQ**

25 January 2023

Dear Sirs

**PLANNING APPLICATION HPK/2022/0563
PROPOSED ANCILLARY BUILDING AND EXTENSIONS AT 10, ROBERTSON ROAD,
BUXTON**

I have been asked by neighbours to place on record the following objections to the above proposed house. I have read responses to this application made by Dr and Mrs Marrison. As I agree with the comments made, I shall not repeat them, but ask them to be taken into consideration in addition to the following.

The application asks for permission to demolish the existing outbuilding to the south of the host house, describing it as in 'substantial disrepair'. A visual examination of the outside of the building from the road and No 10 shows that it is, in fact, in good condition externally – where it matters.

The Heritage Statement includes only one photograph, downloaded from Google Earth. However, the differences in site levels can only be appreciated by visiting the site, and cannot be seen on satellite or street-view images. The garden and patio to No 8 Robertson Road are about one storey or 2 metres below the proposed building. No 8 has a garage under the rear of the house that is reached by a steep drive. Although the boundary wall between 8 and 10 slopes down from east to west, it does nothing to reduce the impact of the ancillary building on the garden to No 8. The application plans show this wall, erroneously, as being level.

Because of this difference in heights between the two adjoining gardens, it is clear that the boundary wall is also a retaining wall. This wall is the responsibility of the owners of No 8. The South Elevation of the annexe shows that the ground floor level is approximately 1100mm below existing ground level. Excavations for foundations would be a further 750 to 900mm below even this level, giving a total excavation of approximately 2 metres below existing ground level. Conventionally, foundations project at least 150mm out from the wall that they support, with the necessary trench work being considerably wider to provide a safe environment to those working in the trench. The boundary distance, scaled from the Site Plan, has been reduced from the previous application, and is negligible. The foundation trench would encroach substantially on to the neighbouring garden. It is accepted that the dimensions above are approximate, and are estimated from small-scale plans. The only way to clarify this is to carry out an accurate survey of levels on both sides of the boundary. This information should have been supplied with the application. It is doubtful, however, that an accurate survey would significantly alter the conclusions above. It is difficult to see how the proposed annexe building could be erected without considerable disturbance to the property of No 8. The owners, Dr and Mrs Marrison, have indicated that, in any case, they would not allow their own property to be disturbed.

The application shows no details of ground conditions. In this part of Buxton limestone can be expected at a shallow depth, making deep excavations difficult and disruptive to neighbours.

The plans are inaccurate. The proposed front and rear elevations show an overall height, using the scale bar on the plan, of 5.45 metres. The proposed elevations (to the sides) show, again using the scale bar, of 4.9 metres. As the boundary is also shown incorrectly, the cumulative errors give a completely false impression of the impact on No 8, Robertson Road.

The application form states that no trees are affected. All trees within the Conservation area are protected by a 'blanket' tree preservation order. Two trees are close to the proposed annexe. A silver birch tree is 2.7 metres from the boundary wall, opposite the basement garage to No 8. Its girth, at about 1.5 metres above ground level, is approximately 440mm. This results in a root protection area with radius of 5.28 metres. A second tree, an acer, near the rear of the proposed extension, has a girth of approximately 500mm, giving a root protection area of 6.0 metres radius. It is about 1m metre from the boundary wall.

No 8, Robertson Road was built with some principal windows directly facing No 10. The current distance from the lounge window of No 8 to the boundary is 8.6 metres. This was, of course, built to acceptable standards of separation at the time, but it is reasonable to expect that anything built under current separation standards would not reduce the existing separation.

In March 2022, Natural England halted planning applications in some parts of England following concerns that the run-off of nutrients, principally phosphates and nitrates, were having a detrimental effect on river water quality. Buxton was one of those areas. A solution has yet to be found that will allow building to go ahead where new over-night stays are proposed. Although the annexe is described as ancillary accommodation, including a study and gymnasium, and shower room, it is apparent that with the minimum of work it could be converted into a holiday let, permanent let or even a separate dwelling. Although the current owners of No 10 could be relied upon to seek planning permission for change of use, the same could not be guaranteed of any future owners, leading to over-night stays that would circumvent the nutrients ruling.

Even if all of the above objections could be met, the overall impression is of a building that is completely unacceptable. It would be overbearing to users of the garden and patio at No 8, cutting out all sunlight for most of the year. It is too large for the site, and can be described as overdevelopment. It has absolutely no respect for the conservation area and surrounding residents.

There are no grounds for approving this application and so it must be rejected,

Yours sincerely

Trevor Gilman