

Design & Access Statement

2 Phoside View, Chapel Road, Hayfield - Parking area to provide a safe means of access to house



Background

Phoside View is a pair of fairly large Victorian 3 bedroom semis which are located in the green belt on the A624 main road on the outskirts of Hayfield village.

Both houses have a small raised front garden each that fronts directly onto the main road.

The houses are built into the hillside meaning that the ground floor level at the front of the properties / front gardens is roughly level with the surrounding fields, whilst at the rear of the properties, the fields are roughly level with the first floor level.

1 Phoside View has a parking area at the side of their house capable of accommodating 2-3 cars, however, there is no provision for turning around so using it involves having to reverse onto or off of the A624 main road. There are virtually no visibility splays, which means that pulling out from their parking area is quite dangerous and involves either the use of a mirror on the opposite side of the road or having to have a person standing on the opposite side of the road to

wave you out when there's a suitable gap in the traffic.

2 Phoside View has never had any parking area. There is nowhere anywhere near the house to park, so the closest place to park to 2 Phoside View is in Hayfield village which is roughly 0.4 miles down the road.

The A624 main road up to my house is very narrow with no footpath or even grass verge on either side of the road to walk on up to my house, meaning that **the only way that I can physically get to and from my house is by walking directly up the main road carriageway.**

The only two streetlights on the approach up to my house were permanently turned off a few years ago as part of Derbyshire County Council's electricity saving plan. Walking up the main road carriageway trying to dodge the cars and lorries to get to my house is really quite dangerous even on the brightest of summer days.....but trying to do this in complete darkness is **EXTREMELY DANGEROUS!!!**

This planning application seeks to solve the problem by providing a safe place to park at the side of my house.



Above is a photo of walking down the carriageway to my car in the evening.....the road is completely pitch black.....so very difficult for approaching vehicles to spot pedestrians walking in the carriageway to / from my house.



Above is the same view taken during the daytime.....no footpath or verge to walk on when walking down to my car in Hayfield village.

Relevant Planning History

HPK/2001/0566 - This was an application by No. 1 Phoside View for an extra driveway (they already had a driveway for 1-2 cars at the time). Despite this extra driveway being very close to a blind bend in the road, having virtually zero exit visibility and having to use a mirror on the opposite side of the road to reverse on / off the main road onto it - this application was approved in 2002.

HPK/2007/0421 - This application in 2007 by No. 2 Phoside View was for a single parking space at the side of the house. This scheme was similar to that approved 5 years earlier for No. 1 Phoside View as in it would have virtually zero exit visibility and would require the use of a mirror on the opposite side of the road to

reverse on / off the main road to use it. Despite this scheme being a lot further away from the blind bend in the road than the scheme that was approved for No. 1 Phoside View, this application was refused.....mainly on the grounds of highway safety.

I've had a few discussions with both High Peak Council and Derbyshire County Council over the years about what would be required to get a safe place to park at my house that would be acceptable to the council. They have always said that they were very unlikely to approve any scheme that involved reversing onto or off of the A624 main road. They said that in order to get any parking scheme approved, I would have to demonstrate that the parking area could be entered and exited in a forward gear, that it would have a suitable area to turn around in and that there would be suitably sized visibility splays.

The Access

Due to the alignment of 1&2 Phoside View houses with the road, plus the blind bend in the road down towards Hayfield village direction, the only way to get any kind of visibility splay in the Hayfield direction is to have the access point off the main road further up the field where exit visibility is much better. There would then be a short track running up to a parking area at the side of my house.

To be able to work out the size of the visibility splays required, the 85th percentile wet weather speed of traffic approaching the site from each direction is required. The gradient of the road is also needed.

A company called Road Data Services Ltd was commissioned to carry out a speed survey to determine the 85th percentile wet weather speed of traffic approaching the site in each direction. The gradient of the road was then measured at 5 metre intervals all the way up the white road edge line near my house.

The results of the speed survey, together with the gradients measured were then put in to the equation as listed in the "Manual for Streets 2" to determine the "absolute minimum" acceptable sizes required for the visibility splays.

A company called JG Highway Design was then used to accurately plot the visibility splays on to a scaled Ordnance Survey map to demonstrate that the

required sightlines can be achieved. They then did a swept path analysis to show that there is a suitable space to drive into the parking area in a forward gear, turn around, then exit back out on to the main road in a forward gear.

The Design

The scheme has been designed to have very little impact on the surrounding area and would be hardly even noticable when viewed from almost any angle.

The parking area itself would be excavated into the hill, following the same level as the pathway that currently runs down the side of my house. The pathway down the side of my house would also be incorporated into the parking / turning area to ensure that the parking / turning area extends the minimum distance possible out into the field.

Essentially, the existing retaining wall that runs down the side of the house would just be dismantled and reconstructed further out into the field to allow space for two cars to be parked at the side of the house. The new retaining wall would be faced with natural stone and would follow the same line / height as the retaining wall that's currently there now.

Due to the fact that the parking area would be sunk into the hill, and a new line of trees / bushes would be planted in front of the parking area, any parked cars would be hidden away below the level of the field, so would not be seen when viewed from almost any angle.

The track would be surfaced with slate chippings - the same as most other farm tracks and driveways nearby. The entrance onto the track would be surfaced with natural stone flags to prevent slate chippings from making their way out onto the main road. The track would sit slightly lower than the retaining wall at the front, meaning that the track would be unlikely to be noticable when viewed from most angles either.

Relevant Planning Policies

High Peak Local Plan 2016

Policy EQ3 on Rural Development states that in the Green Belt, "the Council will

seek to ensure that new development is strictly controlled in order to protect the landscape's intrinsic character and distinctiveness, including the character, appearance and integrity of the historic and cultural environment and the setting of the Peak District National Park whilst also facilitating sustainable rural community needs, tourism and economic development". It goes on to say that the policy allows for "extensions to existing dwellings provided they are subsidiary to the building and do not have an adverse impact on the character of the landscape". An access track / parking area to provide access to an existing dwelling should therefore be acceptable under this policy.

Policy EQ4 on Green Belt Development states that "the Council will seek to protect the Green Belt and maintain its openness and permanence. The boundaries of the Green Belt are defined on the Policies Map. Within the Green Belt, planning permission will not be granted for development unless it is in accordance with national planning policy".

National Planning Policy Framework July 2021

Paragraphs 110-112 of the NPPF talks about highway safety when considering development proposals. It states that "when assessing applications for development, it should be ensured that safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users".....

It also states that "development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe."

It says that "within this context, applications for development should create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards."

This planning application seeks to address the current safety concerns regarding a safe means of access to the existing dwelling.....**the current situation with pedestrians having to dodge cars and lorries whilst walking in the middle of a very narrow, busy, unlit main road carriageway to access the existing dwelling is extremely dangerous!**

Paragraphs 147-150 of the NPPF talks about proposals affecting the Green Belt. It states that "inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations".

It goes on to say that certain forms of development however, are not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. Some relevant examples of the types of development that are considered to be acceptable within the Green Belt are:-

- Engineering operations.
- Local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location.
- Material changes in the use of land.
- The extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

The addition of a parking area / access track to an existing house should be considered a combination of the above acceptable forms of development.

Whilst "very special circumstances" certainly do exist to justify development within the Green Belt.....as in to address the current lack of any kind of safe means of access to 2 Phoside View, the development falls within the "acceptable forms of development" in the Green Belt anyway.

Pre-application advice

I've spoken to High Peak Council for some pre-application advice. They didn't

seem to have any objections to the proposals and said that it seems to fit in with their policies on acceptable forms of development in the green belt, subject to it using appropriate materials etc. so that it has as little impact as possible on the surrounding area.

I've also sent the layout drawings / visibility splays plans into Derbyshire County Council who have confirmed that the sightlines / turning area etc. are all of a suitable size and that they are unlikely to raise any objections to the proposals.

Summary

The proposed access / parking area will solve the problem of not being able to safely access 2 Phoside View. The scheme has been designed to use natural materials that will have very little visual impact on the surrounding area, and the parking area would be discreetly tucked away down the side of the house where it can't be seen from almost any viewpoint. The scheme appears to fit in with all relevant planning policies and highway safety standards. It will also have the additional benefit of freeing up an extra two on-street parking spaces down in Hayfield village where on-street parking is severely overstretched.

