

Appeal Statement - 150 Buxton Road, Whaley Bridge, High Peak, SK23 7JF

Introduction

This appeal arises from the refusal to grant planning permission for a Single Storey Rear Extension, Front & Rear Dormer at 150 Buxton Road, Whaley Bridge. The statement addresses the principal issues arising from High Peak Borough Council's refusal, that the proposed front dormer 'is considered to be harmful to the character of the host dwelling and its adjoining neighbour and the wider street scene'.



Fig.1 Front View of 150 Buxton Road

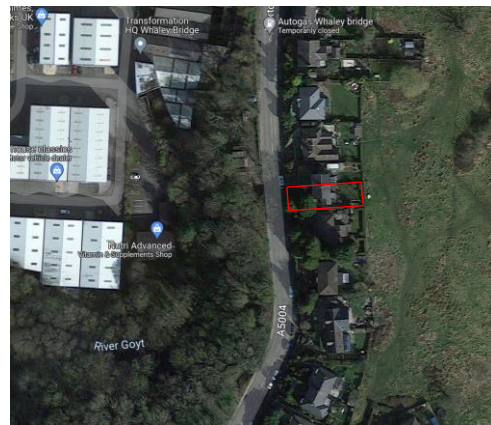


Fig 2. Aerial Map

The Site

The site is located within the built-up area boundary to the South of the market town of Whaley Bridge. It is set high above Buxton Road level and backs onto open fields to the rear and a number of small garages and Botany Business Park to the West.

150 Buxton Road is a red brick semi-detached property set amongst a number of properties which vary in size from detached, semi-detached to bungalows. This resulting in no common roof line or similar roof types. There is no distinct character unique to Buxton Road with numbers 128 to 134 providing a small representation that there is no uniformity of design or pattern of development in this area.

As you move South along Buxton Road away from the town, the properties become increasingly higher than the roadside. Once at 150 Buxton Road there is a substantial change in level with a stone wall retaining a bank of soft landscaping, neighbouring mature trees and several steps up to the property. This creates a physical and visual distinction between the roadside and the houses above.

The property has previously benefitted from a small 2 storey side extension.



Fig.3 No's 128-134 Buxton Road



Fig 4. View of Site from Road

Proposal

The applicants wish to increase their living accommodation through the construction of a single storey rear extension with a front and rear dormer.

Such development is supported in principle by the policies set out in High Peak Borough Councils Adopted Local Plan 2016 and by guidance in the supplementary High Peak Design Guide, Residential Design Guide and Landscape Character document.

The LPA raises no objection to the single storey rear extension and rear dormer, determining that 'the proposed rear dormer would not significantly harm the visual character of the host dwelling or wider area' and 'The proposed rear extension is acceptable'.

However they object to the front dormer on the grounds that it is unbalanced next to its adjoining neighbour and is harmful to the wider street scene.

Design

High Peaks Local Plan Policy EQ 6 states that all development should be well designed, of a high quality and respond to the areas character, history and scale. The adopted High Peak Design Guide 2018 sets out what development should respond to with paragraph 5.5 stating that 'All extensions should harmonise with the parent building. An extension should respect the dominance of the original building and be subordinate to it in terms of its size and massing'. This is reiterated in the Residential Design Guide '9.1 Extensions should be designed so as to subordinate to the main form of the house'.

The proposed front dormer is a considered addition to the property having a substantial set back from the eaves and a clear visual break from the main ridge line. It is deemed a small addition in relation to the area of pitched roof of the host dwelling and the additional 2 storey side extension. The dormer face and cheeks are to be clad with materials to match the existing slate roof tiles and anthracite windows introduced to harmonise the 2 elements and ensure its subservient relationship with the parent building.

Paragraph 3.11 of the design guide expresses 'there are some basic principles that need to be followed if the new is to balance successfully with the old. These relate to the main characteristics of traditional elevations with a balance of proportions between the overall shape

of the walls and the openings they contain and a high solid to void ratio in which the wall dominates’.

The relationship of the dormers solid to void elements respects that of the host dwelling, providing a balance between the area of glazing to that of the surrounding slate. This is strengthened further with the additional two-storey side extension roof mass.

The proposed elevational drawings submitted alongside the planning application may not offer a true representation of the material choice and the positioning of the dormer with the surrounding pitched roof. The following image shows a more realistic depiction of the proposal. Figure 6 shows how 168 Buxton Road offers an example of how this matching material choice blends the dormer into the roof.

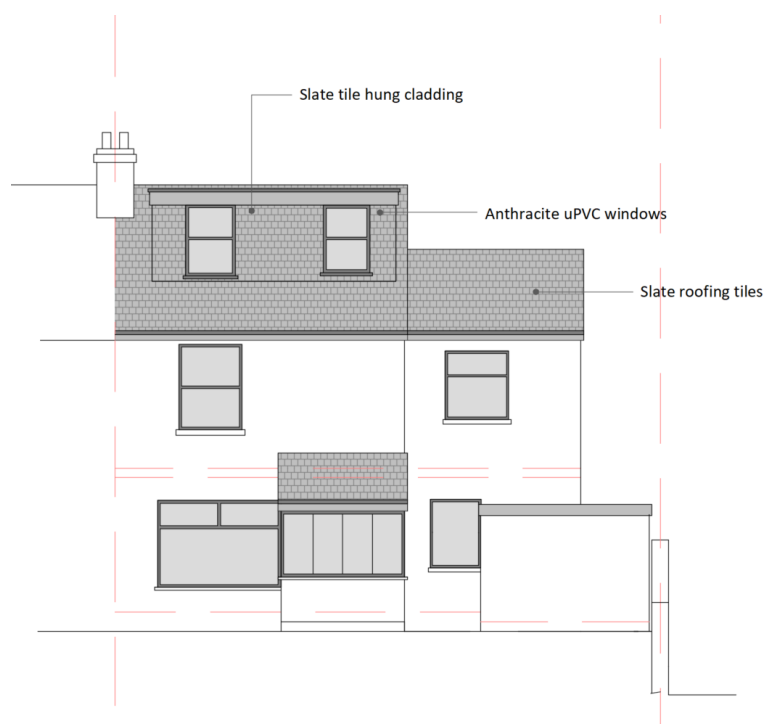


Fig. 5 Proposed Front Elevation – Rendered

Paragraph 9.4.2 of the High Peak Adopted Residential Design guide states that “Dormers pose difficulties in terms of design and overlooking. They should be kept as small and simple as possible; they will often be unacceptable on the front elevation of houses, especially terraces properties.”

Overlooking is irrelevant in this case, and the statement previously demonstrates that the design considers scale, materials and prominence. The guide does not rule out front dormers but reinforces the message that each application is to be assessed on its own merits raising particular concern for terrace properties, where the addition of a front dormer would be at odds with a continuous roofline. As there is no relationship of rooflines along Buxton Road, the addition of a front dormer would not unduly impact the wider street scene.

This statement goes onto to demonstrate that there is no clear roofline, pattern, or general character to the properties in the surrounding area.

Street Scene and Site Context

The designated report states that the dwellings in the streetscape 'predominantly do not have front dormers' yet in a run of 9 properties, which includes the proposal site, 5 of the detached and semi-detached dwellings have existing dormers. There is no consistency in the rhythm of the buildings' size or design and consequently the proposal is complementary to the local identity as there are a number of front dormers in the area.



Fig. 6 168 & 170 Buxton Road



Fig 7. 156 & 158 Buxton Road



Fig. 8 134 Buxton Road

Number 134 Buxton Road has a front dormer which was constructed without planning permission. As each application should be considered on its surroundings & site context, therefore we would expect this to be a consideration as it has become an established part of the street scene.

Relationship with Adjoining Semi-Detached Property

The LPA's refusal states that the dormer would 'unbalance the pair of semi-detached properties' yet it is felt that the addition of the 2 storey side extension helps to balance the dormer against the neighbouring attached property.

The delegated report reasons that 'Given its elevated position, and prominence in the street scene the dormer window would be a significant and noticeable addition to the roof slope'. However it is argued that the topography of the site creates limited front on views of the semi-detached properties. Whilst using the main footpath below the houses, the angle at which they are observed reduces the view of the pitched roofs, with no view whilst directly in front of the property.



Fig 9. View of Site from South



Fig 10. View of Site from North

Whilst travelling along Buxton Road into Whaley Bridge the established vegetation to the South of the site screens views of the semi-detached properties. When viewed from the North, the front dormer would be views alongside the existing large rear dormer at 148 Buxton Road.

The delegated report refers to a photo of the site which is taken from opposite side of Buxton Road. This vantage point is rarely used by the public as it is leading out of town on a side where there are no dwellings and a lack of resulting destination, with the path stopping further along the road. Its reduced width and close proximity to the fast road reinforces the reasons for its lack of use. The reduced used is confirmed by its overgrown nature and that the alternative East side adjacent to the dwellings has a wider footpath which is protected from passing traffic by the adjacent parked cars.



Fig. 11 Overgrown Pavement

Conclusion

This statement demonstrates the considered design of the proposed dormer which respects the host dwelling, neighbouring property, and wider street scene.

Due to the small scale of the proposal in relation to the remaining roof area and the use of materials to match the existing roof covering, the dormer would not appear at odds with the existing dwelling.

The proposal would not have a harmful impact upon the character and appearance of the area as the street scene includes no general size or character of property. Furthermore the street scene includes examples of pitched and flat roof front dormer, which irrespective of planning permission have become an established part of the wider street scene.

Additionally sites topography and established vegetation reduces visibility and prominence of the semi-detached properties.

The design accords with High Peak Local Plan Policies and Design Guides and National Planning Policy Framework. There would be no “significant and demonstrable harm” resulting from the proposal and therefore paragraph 14 of the Framework and Policy S1a of the High Peak Local Plan indicates that the presumption should be in favour of the development.

Consequently, and in accordance with section 79 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, it is respectfully requested that the Inspector considers this appeal and grants planning permission for the development.