



Reference: HPK/2023/0159

Branksome Cottage, Gadley Lane, Buxton Sk17 6UY

11 July 2023

Dear Mr Cleary

I have read the letters from the conservation and environment agency officers regarding the above application and would like to respond. Please see the two documents attached.

I also wanted to point out that it appears that the conservation officer did not receive the plans and elevations supplied. I did have difficulty with scaling them when uploading and so supplied hard copies to your office. These do not appear to be on the website.

If any further information/clarification is needed please let me know.

Kind regards

Keith Ryder

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Regarding the concerns of the **conservation officer** I would like to make the following points:

1. **Heritage statement** - I would like to add the following:

The property (built in the early 20th century) lies on the western edge of the Buxton Park conservation area, beyond the Serpentine Walks. To the north-west are seven new houses and a new estate of houses lies within 1/4 mile to the west. Both developments are less than 20 years old.

There are no public rights of way through the land. No records for the property itself are listed on the historic environment record.

Regarding the proposed work, as slates for the roof will be reused at the front of the property; the guttering downpipes and eaves boards will be repainted matching the existing colours and the deck extension (reversible) and french doors (minimal loss of fabric) will be at the back of the property (not seen from the road) the proposed developments will not be conspicuous and have little effect on the ability to appreciate the heritage asset.

The changing of concrete mortar and replacing it with lime mortar and replacing a previous poor repair of the roof, constitute the replacement of detrimental features by new and more harmonious/traditional ones.

2. Regarding the roof, the majority of it has small slates with a poor repair of larger slates at the back. The roofing contractor (Terry Peel) was confident that he would be able to supply reclaimed slates that match the existing small slates. He did identify the type of slate when he quoted and we have emailed him to ask for this information. To avoid confusing build dates and to minimise harm, the aspect of the roof facing the road could be reslated using existing slates and the back aspect using reclaimed ones from elsewhere.
3. The repainting referred to in the document refers to the eaves boards, guttering and down pipes. There are no bricks to be repainted.
4. Scaled plans and elevations were supplied (hand-delivered to the council as difficulties with scaling up when downloading were encountered). They are not showing on the website.

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Regarding **Environmental Agency objections**, I would like to supply further information regarding legally protected species at the site.

Otters

No presence of otters (footprints, spraints , sightings) has ever been detected by ourselves or our neighbours. The river does not appear to be a suitable habitat for otters for the following reasons:

1. It is generally shallow, both upstream (through Gadley Wood) and downstream (as it flows into Buxton) - otters would not be able to swim in it. Adjacent to the proposed site it is generally 15cm deep.
2. It is narrow: approximate width 3.5m near the site.
3. The area is popular with dog walkers and dogs frequently enter the water.
4. There is a ford upstream which is regularly used by motorcycles and occasionally by cars.

The area under the decking has no signs of otter habitation and seems an unlikely place for an otter holt/resting place for the following reasons:

1. It is used for storage and has electric lighting above.
2. The river next to the decking has steep stone banks (generally a 90cm vertical drop to water level).
3. The decking is in daily use.

There was an ecological report in 2015 for the demolition and rebuilding of properties in Riversvale (border 10 metres away) and no presence of otters were found.

Bats

The loft area has no sign of bat habitation (droppings). It is completely insulated with fibreglass wool, is 50% boarded out, is used for storage and has electric lighting. The height and floor area of the loft is small as the bedroom ceilings intrude into it.