

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

HPK/2023/0254
Valid 23/06/2023

GEORGE MANSIONS, ST
JOHNS ROAD, BUXTON,
DERBYSHIRE, SK17 6XW

APPLICATION FOR THE
ADDITION OF DECORATIVE
DUMMY WINDOWS TO
IMPROVE THE VISUAL
APPEARANCE OF THE
EXISTING SECTION OF THE
SOUTH ELEVATION

FULL PLANNING –
(ALTERATION)

MAIN ISSUES

Impact on the character and appearance of the Grade II listed building.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application relates to George Mansions, a Grade-II listed former public house and hotel in Buxton town centre, set between St Johns Road and Water Street at the front and George Street at the rear, and within the Buxton Central Conservation Area and Article 4 area. Originally dating from around 1770, the building has previously been converted into apartments. It is unclear from planning records when the building was changed to residential use, however the heritage statement submitted with the application suggests that this may have taken place in the early C20th.

George Mansions is a substantial building set across a sloping site, three storeys in height at the front elevation and four storeys at the rear, and set within landscaped grounds at the east and west sides and with a parking bay at the front. The building is in a prominent position on St John's Road.

The building is surrounded at the rear by the Crescent Hotel, restaurants, and bar, and a motor repair/MOT business which adjoins the application site.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks permission for 3 no. mock windows painted on to the wall of the south elevation to match existing fenestration. Mock windows are to be created using black and white paint to delineate frames, astragals cill and lintel features at George Mansions, a residential apartment block which is Grade II Listed.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

High Peak Local Plan 2016

S 1 Sustainable Development Principles

S 1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

S 7 Buxton Sub Area Strategy
EQ 6 Design and Place Making
EQ 7 Built and Historic Environment

Supplementary Planning Documents

High Peak Design Guide
Residential Design SPD

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

Including sections -
2: Achieving sustainable development
6: Building a strong, competitive economy
12: Achieving well-designed places
16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

HPK/0003/0955 - Alterations To Public House Including New Windows To Rear Extension, Resited Cellar Stair And New Bar And Seating. Approved, 06/10/1992

HPK/2002/0264 & HPK/2002/0265 - External Landscaping Scheme And Minor Amendments To Rear Elevation. Approved, 22/05/2002

HPK/2008/0073 - Listed Building Consent : Refurbishment Of Ground Floor Public House Area With Adjustments To Ground Floor Elevations Incl. 2 No. New Window Openings And New Temporary Kitchen Extract Duct. Approved, 08/04/2008

HPK/2008/0074 - Refurbishment Of Ground Floor Public House Areas. Approved, 08/04/2008

HPK/2021/0371 Improvement of facade by removal of modern window designs and replacement with sash windows. •Re-routing / removing pipework on facades. •Internal modifications to flats to improve layouts. Minor internal layout alterations to others. – Approved 2022

HPK/2021/0383 Listed Building Consent for: •Improvement of facade by removal of modern window designs and replacement with sash windows. •Re-routing / removing pipework on facades. •Internal modifications to flats to improve layouts. Minor internal layout alterations to others – Approved 2022

DOC/2022/0016 Discharge of conditions 4, 5, 6, 7, 11 and 12 in relation to HPK/2021/0383 – Approved 2023

DOC/2022/0072 Discharge of conditions 5,6,7,8, 9,10,12,13,14 relating to HPK/2021/0371 – Approved 2023

DOC/2022/0073 Discharge of conditions 8,9 and 13 relating HPK/2021/0383 – Approved 2023

HPK/2023/0085 LBC Application to remove existing "George Mansions" sign from building – Approved

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 25 July 2023

Neighbour consultation period ends: 27 July 2023

Public Comments

No comments received during the consultation period

Town / Parish Comments

N/A

Conservation Officer

No comments to make.

DCC Highways

No comment

DCC Archaeology

No archaeological implications.

Historic England

We suggest that you seek the views of your specialist conservation and archaeological advisers.

Severn Trent Water

Having reviewed our statutory sewer records, they do not currently demonstrate any public sewers on the property.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

The Local Planning Authority is required to determine planning applications in accordance with the development plan, unless there are material circumstances which indicate otherwise and in determining these applications, it shall have regard to the provisions of the Development Plan, in so far as material to the application and to any other material considerations.

Planning applications that accord with policies within the Local Plan will be approved without delay and where there are no relevant policies, or they are out of date, the Council will grant planning permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

When considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The principle of development can only be deemed acceptable if the existing character and appearance of the listed building will be preserved or enhanced.

Impact on the character and appearance of the Grade II listed buildings.

Section 66(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

LP Policy S1 sets out a number of sustainability principles which all new development proposals should incorporate in order to make a positive contribution towards the sustainability of communities and to protect, and where possible enhance the environment.

LP Policy EQ6 states that all development should be well designed to respect and contribute positively to the character, identity and context of High Peak's townscapes, in terms of scale, height, density, and layout.

LP Policy EQ7 has regard to the Built and Historic Environment. It states that the Council will conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. This will take into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing their significance and will ensure that development proposals contribute positively to the character of the built and historic environment in accordance with sub area strategy S7.

The NPPF states amongst other things that new development should add to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and sympathetic to the surrounding built environment.

Chapter 16 of the NPPF contains the restrictive national planning policies relating to heritage conservation. Paragraphs 199-202 set out how a local planning authority should assess the significance of a heritage asset and the potential of a development proposal upon that asset. Where a proposal will lead to substantial harm or total loss of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent unless there are substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits.

The Historic England National Heritage List describes the building as follows:

Public house and hotel. c1770 with mid C19 addition and C20 restoration. Ashlar and dressed stone with ashlar dressings and Welsh slate hipped roofs with stone stacks.

EXTERIOR: 4 storeys to main range, 3 and 2 storeys to additions. Original southwest front has 4 storey, 6 windows range to right. Off-centre later doorway with 4-panel double doors with overlight in deeply moulded segment headed surround. To left a single sash and to right 4 similar sashes. Above 6 sashes to each floor, those to the third floor smaller, topped by 3 dormer windows. To left 3 storey wing with fullheight canted bay window with plain sashes and 2 pairs of sashes beyond. Northwest front 3 storey, 7-window front with 2 storey single window wings. First and second-floor sill bands. Central segment headed doorway in moulded ashlar surround with flanking columns and keystone, plus double glazed doors with side lights and overlight. Either side 3 2/2 sashes, above 7 segment headed similar sashes, above again 7 similar sashes. Wings have single segment headed tripartite sashes with keystones and above single 2/2 sashes. Rear: regular 4-window range; first bay and right return rebuilt at all levels. Left return: 3-window range. Projecting stacks. Single storey outbuildings.

INTERIOR: not inspected.

Alterations to the road routes led to the decline of The George, and subsequent rise of The Grove.

The proposed development comprises 3 no. mock windows painted on to the wall of the south elevation to match existing fenestration. Mock windows to be created using black and white paint to delineate frames, astragals cill and lintel features at George Mansions, a residential apartment block which is Grade II Listed..

The building was built, as the George Hotel, approximately 1770 as a speculative venture. It underwent substantial alterations during the 19th century before changing its use from hotel to residential use in the 20th century.

It is acknowledged that the Council's Conservation Officer has no comment to make and raises no objection to the proposal.

The ongoing refurbishment works at George Mansions has generally sought to improve the external appearance of the building. The result of these improvements, whilst enhancing the appearance of the existing building within its historical setting, have also served to highlight the inferior quality of the section of the south elevation which stands above George Street.

It is understood that the south elevation was rebuilt in the 1970's following structural collapse. The design of the replacement facade is not in keeping with the quality of the rest of the building. The format and dimensions of the facing masonry are more modern in appearance and the window sizes and patterns do not follow the elegant proportions of the original design. However large, uninterrupted expanses of more modern masonry continue to define the appearance of this elevation. The proposal seeks to further improve the appearance of this elevation with addition of the mock windows aligned with the existing windows on the elevation (bearing in mind the fact that the three existing window openings per floor are not centred on the elevation).

The addition of the mock windows is not considered harmful to the character of the building, or the conservation area. The introduction of mock fenestration, applied to the face of the stonework using paint will visually break up the large area of

uninterrupted stonework. This was frequently done by the Georgians, in the era of the window tax it was common to see stately homes with many dummy windows painted onto the facades. The northeast corner of the Crescent has a prime example of a dummy window, painted on the façade in exactly this manner. The paintwork will be sympathetic, to ensure that no historic fabric would be lost as a result of the works, allowing the safeguarding of the listed building and enhance the special character/ historic heritage of the Listed Building, in accordance with Policy EQ7.

The proposal would therefore accord with the provisions of local plan policies EQ6, EQ7 and sections 12 and 16 of the NPPF in this regard.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

It is considered that the proposed development would sustain and enhance the character and significance of the Grade-II listed building and the surrounding Conservation Area.

For the above reasons it is considered the proposed development would represent a sustainable form of development and would accord with the relevant policies of the Local Plan and the NPPF and accordingly the application is recommended for approval.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL

Case Officer: Pet Twigg

Recommendation Date: 21.8.2023

X 

Signed by: Jane Colley Signature

On behalf of High Peak Borough Council