

Conservation Response.

Date: 11/12/2023.

File/Application ref: HPK/2023/0299.

Case Officer: James Stannard.

Proposal: 'Proposed first floor extension to create an additional bedroom with ensuite'.

Site Address: Meros, Leaden Knowle, Chinley, Derbyshire, SK23 6DA.

Dear James,

Objection. Recommended refusal.

This site, whilst not a listed building, is within Leaden Knowle Conservation Area. A short way from Buxworth heading east, this Conservation Area is small and characterised by an open rural backdrop in a near to '360 degree' view, affording it a strong sense of place. It is closely adjacent to Chinley and Whitehough Conservation Area, of which lies a short way to the east. And for context; on return heading west, is Buxworth Conservation Area.

Leaden Knowle is on marginally sloping topography, descending from the north to south. Historically a Hamlet, the vicinity's make-up is humble and primitive, nucleated at an early and surviving linear route through east to west, with association to the historic railways in both use and development. In Historic OS Maps dated 1899, the area is seen almost as is today, with the (now lost) Peak Tramway intersecting the area to the south near to Black Brook. Today, the route (modern day B6062 Lower Lane) continues to mirror the railway, and is a core gateway between the three closely sited Conservation Areas in this area consisting of; Buxworth (similarly following the curvature of the railway), Leaden Knowle and Chinley and Whitehough.

At Leaden Knowle, there has been very little change. The rural context enveloping the vicinity survives, forming a significant well survived setting, contributing to the historic legibility of the Hamlet.

The form and scale of the Leaden Knowle Conservation Area is simple, sporadic and unassuming. The early cluster of buildings and their footprint remain to the east of the asset, situated close to the fork in the road. Predominantly made up of two storey gritstone vernacular cottages or houses, narrow in plan, seeing chimneys to gable and centre where there are more than two in a row, short plots and some surviving original boundary treatments. Lower Lane, though a main thoroughfare by modern standards, remains a narrow route through the centre. The vicinity appears to gradually reveal itself almost to 'those who care to look', creating familiar historic authenticity and aesthetic value.

The location of the site is to the north of the Conservation Area, at an open portion, and with no dwellings or structures either side. It has a wide and exposed frontage and set back and up from the road to a degree. It is a dwelling of the vernacular, seeing two storeys with solid gritstone walling, chimney to gable, symmetrical front elevation, and an overall modest yet heavyset character, typical of the High Peak. A building of this orientation appears here on Historic OS Maps dated circa early 1900s. One of a more elementary form is seen previously and lying perpendicular, though this appears to have been lost at an earlier time.

This vicinity and the setting of the Conservation Area is of great importance, as legible historic association and the context upon which historic value is drawn upon, remains positive and well survived. It is a good example.

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This scheme shows the addition of a square or box-like extension to the rear of the house, appearing to perhaps be a take on a Modernist structure. The material palette is envisaged to be something akin to Corten steel, which has a strong orange appearance, similar to that of, or to mimic rusted metals. When raining the behaviour of this purposely deteriorated steel varies, and unfortunately becomes particularly unsightly when wet. The form is envisaged to feature a cantilever, with extensive glazing and glazed balcony to the west.

In proposed elevation, the extension sits uncomfortably against the vernacular of the original dwelling. Where, in the east elevation, it is seen to stretch the form of the building. Creating a visually jarring, and strange relationship of ratios between the forms, that are not in harmony. In addition, it appears that the existing smaller extensions such as side porch and conservatory will remain. This appears to create an abnormal collection of what feels to be what I can only describe at this time as 'spare parts' surrounding, or in a cluster, around the traditional dwelling.

I am interested in how the concept for the scheme has been derived. I disagree that the design has been informed by character from the area. It does not align with the vernacular. The material palette is not traditional to the High Peak, and against many of our historic rural structures would be considerably alien in appearance. I do not agree that the proposal has taken into account distinctive features and character of Leaden Knowle Conservation Area, in order to inform the design.

To conclude:

I assess that impact will arise from this proposal. By virtue of the scale, material palette, design and its location at the top of the site, the scheme is not harmonious with the surroundings and looks to cause visual obtrusion. I do not see that the project has taken into account Setting in terms of heritage, and the Conservation Area.

The proposals would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, contrary to Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. With regard to the National Planning Policy Framework, the harm would be less than substantial. However it is not considered that there are public benefits to outweigh the heritage harm identified. I cannot support this scheme and recommend refusal.

This scheme contravenes the following Local Policy:

Policy EQ6. In particular:

"...requiring that development contributes positively to an area's character, history and identity in terms of scale, height, density, layout, appearance, materials and the relationship to adjacent buildings and landscape features".

Policy EQ7. In particular:

"...requiring proposed developments that affect a heritage asset and or its setting including alterations and extensions to existing buildings to demonstrate how the proposal has taken account of design, form, scale, mass, use of traditional materials and detailing, siting and views away from and towards the heritage asset in order to ensure that the design is sympathetic and minimises harm to the asset".

This scheme is in conflict with regard to the following NPPF paragraphs:
202.

Regards,

E Holland.
Principal Conservation Officer.