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Categories:

Application Reference No. : HPK/2025/0104 Site Address: Woodcock View Chapel Brow Charlesworth Derbyshire
SK13 5HH Glossop Comments by: Susan & Peter Jenkins

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Submission: Objection

Comments: Objection to the proposed Planning Application for development at Woodcock View, Chapel Brow - Ref. HPK/2025/0104

Introduction

The Planning Application Ref. HPK/2025/0104 was submitted to HPBC by the Applicant, Mr David Winterbottom (DW), and his agents on 19 March 2025 (per the HPBC website).

We accepted an invitation by DW to learn about the plans on 21 March, and were kindly hosted by DW and his wife, who showed us (and our neighbours from Barnfield) Computer Generated Images (CGIs) of how they, and their agent, anticipate the proposed finished building and grounds would appear if built per their submission. The CGI images did not contain any measurements and we were viewing them on an iPad screen. As ‘lay-people’ we found it very difficult to extrapolate these to a ‘real-life’ portrayal and to take in the implications for this important Conservation Area, and for ourselves and neighbours. We did realise that this appeared to be a huge project and DW explained that it would be likely to take two years to construct and that in essence it would be a ‘new house’. The difficulty in appreciating the scale at this point was compounded by the lack of measurements on the CGIs, the lack of ‘anchor-points’ in the existing grounds and the realisation that because the property (and those of the neighbours) lie on a slope, the actual scenario differs markedly from that which would pertain on a level area.

We also discovered that ownership of the passageway, which leads to Well Head Farm’s stabling and lies within the Conservation Area, is now attributed to Woodcock View. Hitherto, during the 30+ years that we have lived at Chapel Barn, this had been used exclusively by Well Head Farm. It was a grassy passageway, but fairly recently Well Head Farm installed cobbles and a metal gate with stone pillars, and it has been used for additional parking, as well as improving vehicular access to Well Head Farm’s stables.

The Planning Application was subsequently hosted on the HPBC website and, after this, alongside our neighbours from Barnfield we were permitted to visit Woodcock View's garden, on 12 April, in order to make some simple measurements, using a tape-measure and information obtained from the site plans hosted within the on-line Planning Application. The huge scale of the proposals then rapidly became apparent.

We have given considerable thought to the potential ramifications of the proposed changes for the Higher Charlesworth Conservation Area, the wider perspective (vistas and experience of those visiting / travelling through this area and to the historic Chapel and its ecclesiastical graveyard etc) and for our small neighbourhood. We have therefore come to the decision that we must strongly object to the Planning Application.

 

Objection to the proposed Planning Application for development at Woodcock View, Chapel Brow - Ref. HPK/2025/0104

Grounds for Objection

We refer to High Peak Borough Council's (HPBC) document:

¿Charlesworth Conservation Area Character Appraisal¿, Adopted October 2010 by HPBC

For ease of reference this states:

1.1 The High Peak area (excluding the Peak District National Park) has 32 designated conservation areas. These are defined as ¿an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance¿

1.2 Each conservation area has a distinct character which can be derived from a number of factors such as; topography; historical development; townscape value; open spaces; traditional street furniture and surfaces.

1.3 The Charlesworth Conservation Area was designated by High Peak Borough Council in 1976 and extended in May 1997. It is important that the special architectural or historic interest that justifies designation is defined and recorded. The purpose of this Appraisal is, in accordance with the methodology recommended by English Heritage, to define and record the special architectural and historic interest of the Charlesworth Conservation Area. In turn this has been used to prepare management proposals setting out actions to maintain and enhance the special character of the area.

Section 3 of the document states:

3.1 The special character of the Charlesworth Conservation Area derives from the following elements:

¿ its nature as a rural village;

- ¿ two distinct character areas: the older part of the settlement a mixture of 17th to 19th century stone terraces and detached buildings on historic thoroughfares; the other largely a late 18th and early 19th century development of the cotton industry, consisting of rows of small terraces and detached buildings;
- ¿ a number of buildings or artefacts listed or of local architectural or historic interest;
- ¿ the group value of the 17th 18th and early 19th century cottages;
- ¿ traditional craftsmanship, natural resources and energy of production embodied in original building materials and architectural features;
- ¿ visual harmony resulting from use of a limited palette of natural building materials, largely locally quarried stone with stone or slate roofs;
- ¿ a mixture of an enclosed character in the centre of the village and a more open character in the outer parts of the designated area;
- ¿ panoramic views from the upper parts of the Conservation Area and significant views out to the south, west and north;
- ¿ the hard and soft landscaped spaces and historic street surfaces in parts of the Conservation Area enhancing the environment;
- ¿ green open space provided by the ecclesiastical burial grounds, planted private gardens and public areas within the village and by open fields within the Conservation Area and around it.

Section 4 states:

This is a pastoral landscape and many of the fields are down to permanent improved pasture. However, with altitude the grazing becomes less intensive and the pasture tends to be unimproved and therefore of greater importance ecologically.

Historical Context

The area surrounding Chapel Brow, has a long historical background dating back to the 12th century. The land was farmed by the Cistercian Monks of Basingwerk Abbey, founders of the original Chapel. The buildings on Chapel Brow, excepting Woodcock View, have associations with this historical farming practice (most were originally agricultural buildings - e.g. High Barn, Chapel Barn, Barnfield, Well Head Farm). The Chapel itself was rebuilt in its current form in 1798 and is a listed building, known locally as ¿Top Chapel¿.

The Chapel and associated ecclesiastical graveyard are the focus around which this small settlement was built. The Chapel, together with its graveyard, is recognised to be of Heritage status and is an important part of the ¿landscape¿ of the Higher Charlesworth Conservation Area. It is a landmark and focal point and has been for centuries. It holds prominence when viewed from the road and from nearby footpaths / bridleways - and on vistas seen from afar. To some extent the existing property (upper and lower levels) at Woodcock View already detracts from this prominence ¿ when ascending and descending Chapel Brow (Ref. illustrative photos). Currently, however, there are still relatively unimpeded panoramic views across to the ancient pastureland (Green Belt) above / behind

this property. These views would be lost to those walking / riding / driving up Chapel Brow if the proposed development goes ahead, as the large-scale development and its massing effect would become very prominent and obliterate much of view, including the horizon, to the detriment of the historical character of this small settlement. It would not be in keeping with the long-standing adjacent small developments which are subordinate to the Chapel and its grounds. The proposed development if executed would markedly alter the character of this Higher Charlesworth Conservation Area - to its detriment.

It would adversely affect the vistas from the Chapel and its associated graveyard - again detrimentally so. The historic Chapel and ecclesiastical graveyard fall within the definition mentioned in section 1.1 'Charlesworth Conservation Area Character Appraisal'. It is an area of special architectural or historic interest 'the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'.

At present the roof of Woodcock View is visible from the Chapel (looking down from the main door) and from parts of the Graveyard (see illustrative photos - to be sent via email) - increasing the size of the building and roofing would detract from these special landscape panoramas and the character of the environment.

The importance of these views is further documented in the HPBC document, including the statement regarding the character of 'Higher Charlesworth' section 4.94:

4.94 General Characteristics:

a mixture of residential, agricultural and ecclesiastical buildings in usage;

enclosed feel to Town Lane with properties built up to the road;

spacious feel to the roads at the extremities of the area with open fields behind properties; many mature trees within property grounds and fields; two restored wells with animal troughs; key buildings: numbers 23 and 62 Town Lane, numbers 1 and 25 Back Lane, Well Head Farm and the barn behind Town Lane.

Impact on important Conservation / Heritage Area

Noting the above, it is abundantly clear that the proposed 'extension' is far from subordinate to the existing structure at Woodcock View (we quote DW, owner of Woodcock View, who said to us, in the presence of neighbours, 'our intention is to create a new house'). The planned 'extension' would be of very considerable size compared with the 'footprint' on which it would stand. The huge scale of the planned building would not be in keeping with existing buildings within this Conservation Area - rather it would be 'intrusive'. It would impede important views of surrounding Green Belt pastureland, not only by neighbouring properties, but also, and most importantly, by those enjoying the vistas as they travel up / down Chapel Brow and to / from the Chapel and its Graveyard or to / from Footpath Charlesworth no. 15 - whether they be in vehicles or travelling on foot, by bicycle or on horseback. The large-scale building proposed would become a more intrusive dominating feature - inappropriate for this location and detrimental to the character of the Higher Charlesworth Conservation Area. It would neither preserve nor enhance the existing scenario, but rather would detract from the Conservation Area.

 Objection: we would ask that the High Peak Borough Planning Officer and Team take note of the existing HBPC document 'Charlesworth Conservation Area Character Appraisal', Adopted October 2010 by HPBC, and recognise that the large-scale development proposed is not subordinate to the existing dwelling; it runs contrary to this important Appraisal document; it would have detrimental impacts on the Conservation Area and landscape, as described above

We therefore ask that the High Peak Borough Planning Officer and Team REJECT the proposal on these grounds.

Further points of objection:

Negative impact on Amenities / Utilities, Ecology and on flooding risk:-

1/ Ecology

Bats - a protected species

Reference: 'Bat Activity Survey by Pennine Ecological' - this document is hosted within the Planning Application documents. It indicates that a bat survey was undertaken by Pennine Ecological in August 2024, on two separate occasions, and did not reveal the presence of a summer roost at Woodcock View. We accept the findings of these experts.

However, in early April 2025, whilst undertaking property / garden maintenance at Chapel Barn, bats were observed flying in the garden of Woodcock View. They appeared to be approaching the eaves of Woodcock View. It seems likely that these were bats undertaking daytime 'foraging' flights from a winter roost. This suggests that there might be a WINTER BAT ROOST within the existing eaves of Woodcock View. This possibility is unlikely to have been excluded by the survey undertaken by Pennine Ecological as it took place in August, and so only looked for evidence of summer roost activity. It would seem that a further survey by experts is required - one designed to consider whether or not Woodcock View hosts a winter bat roost.

2/ Flood risk

Rainwater management

The pastureland / field adjacent to Woodcock View (owned by Well Head Farm) plays an important role in mitigating rainfall run-off from the hills. This land is designated as 'Green Belt' - described in the HPBC Appraisal document - section 4 as 'permanent unimproved pasture', and of 'greater importance ecologically'. This steeply sloped grazing land contributes significantly to the retention of ground water - probably in part due to the helpful action of a long-established network of sub-stratum mycorrhizal fungi assisting with water retention and soil stabilisation.

The current rear garden of Woodcock View, with its small pond, helps to some extent to mitigate rain run-off.

However, during periods of heavy / prolonged rainfall, the capacity the fields above and adjacent to Woodcock View to absorb and retain all the rainwater is exceeded. When the ground is saturated in this manner then, due to the sloping nature of the hillside, water runs-off, flowing downwards channelling through the rear garden at Woodcock View to its lower boundary drystone wall. Historically, on various occasions this has caused damage - e.g. a history of collapse of Woodcock View garden's lower retaining drystone wall and more recently substantial water egress through this drystone wall and its gaps onto Well Head Farm Drive flowing downhill and entering Well Head Farm living quarters (as told to us at the time by our neighbours at Well Head Farm) and also flooding Barnfield outbuildings.

The proposed 'extension' and associated hardstanding / driveways would mean that most of the current rear garden at Woodcock View would be lost, thereby further reducing the capacity of the ground to absorb and retain rainwater: rather it would predispose to further, and more frequent, problems of downstream flooding and might alter the form / route of the water run-off flow.

The 'Green Roof Garden' seems unlikely to mitigate this - we lack clarity on how this could do so or how the roof garden would be managed, especially given the prevailing climate, and noting that on the Planning Application plans there is no access to it from the proposed building - apparently it would be allowed to 'grow wild', and it is not clear what would happen to rainwater running off it.

DW and his agent, being aware of the historic problems with rainwater run-off, have included a proposal for rainwater storage in the plans, but it is unclear whether this would suffice to mitigate increased flood risk both now and in the future - an important consideration with climate change predicted to further exacerbate episodes of high rainfall in this region.

3/ Light

At our property - Chapel Barn - there are two windows facing towards the proposed construction - a window in the master bedroom and the dining room window. The latter provides the only source of daylight to the dining room. The rising morning sun floods through the window to help illuminate the dining room - this is particularly the case during winter months during 'breakfasting hours'. The proposed extension would markedly reduce this natural light source, especially during the early part of the day (the horizon over which the sun rises would be obscured by the proposed building).

This impact is not readily apparent from first inspection of the plans. It is essential to take into account that the proposed building, and our own, are on a slope - this substantially affects 'horizon status' for properties below the proposed 'extension' of Woodcock View, such as Chapel Barn.

4/ Privacy

A large part of the proposed 'extension' would extend markedly into what is currently the rear garden of Woodcock View. This part of the 'extension' was described by DW as the part of the 'extension' which would become the 'main living area'. The elevation of the land where this would be sited and the proposed windows in this storey (noting this would be higher than the existing ground level) would be such that it appears likely that there would be direct views into the side window of our master bedroom, thereby depriving us of some degree of privacy.

 Taking into consideration all the factors given above, we submit this objection to the proposed plans contained in Planning Application - Ref. HPK/2025/0104.

Mr Peter Jenkins

Dr Susan Jenkins

Chapel Barn, Chapel Brow, Charlesworth

On 26 April 2025

PLEASE ALSO SEE EMAIL WITH THE ABOVE CONTENTS and including ILLUSTRATIVE PHOTOS (which do not transfer onto 'comments' submission)

 

ILLUSTRATIVE PHOTOS

1/ from Graveyard ĆTop ChapelĆ (Charlesworth Independent Chapel) - lower path of graveyard

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View from upper part of Top Chapel graveyard

 

2/ View downwards along Chapel Brow from roadside near vehicular exit from Top Chapel

 

Note existing prominence of Woodcock View (upper and lower parts of building and roofs) - this already obscures panorama - this would be far more prominent if the proposed 'extension' went ahead. The further loss of the panoramic views would be substantial.

 

 

Photos

View of Woodcock View from our garden/ drive

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