

Conservation Team Advice

Date: 02/01/2026

Application Ref: HPK/2025/0419

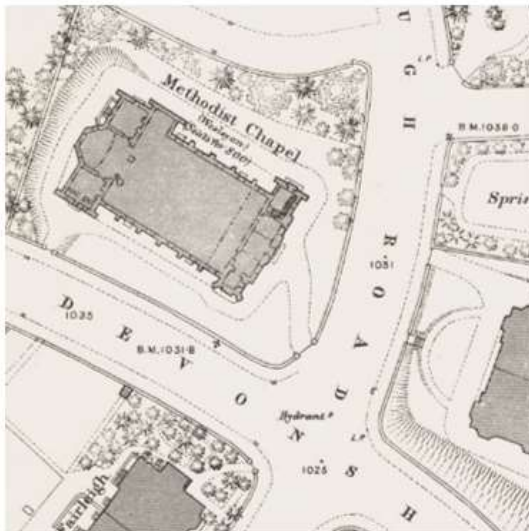
Site Address: 4A Devonshire Road, Buxton

Proposal: Installation of 12x solar panels and associated battery storage systems and BMS/invert external to the building

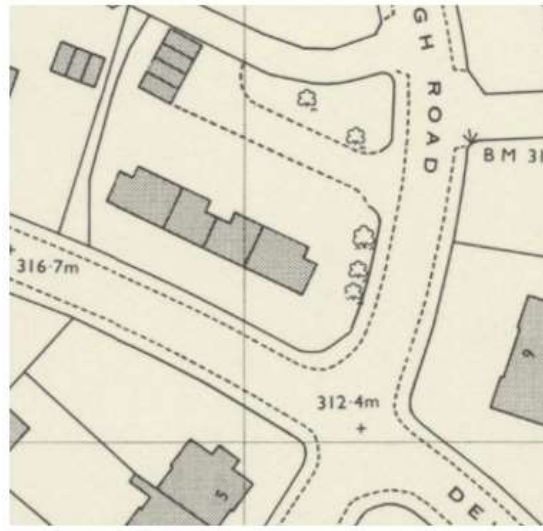
Heritage assets affected:		
Designated Heritage Asset(s):	☒	Buxton The Park Conservation Area
Non-Designated Heritage Assets(s) (NDHAs):	☐	

Conservation Advice

Summary of Significance



1879 Map of application site



1973 Map of application site

1879 Map Source: [OS town plan - Buxton - sheet XV.13.6](#)

1973 Map Source: [Ordnance Survey, SK0473-SK0573](#)

No. 4A Devonshire Road is an end terrace apartment located within the Buxton Park conservation area. The Buxton Park conservation area was designated for its association with Joseph Paxton's Park development which imposes a strong planned

layout and character upon the area. The conservation area is characterised by large detached and semi-detached dwellings. Marlborough Road and Devonshire Road are the later part of the Park development, and features dwellings within smaller plots of land although the overriding character is maintained. Devonshire Road is considered the least cohesive section of the Park development, due to the comparative lack of trees and soft landscaping and the late 20th century introduction of two modern blocks of flats which can be glimpsed along the street scene.

Historical maps show a Wesleyan Chapel to have previously occupied the application site. The church appears on historical maps until the 1970s when the current building appears. The application site itself contrasts with the large villas which characterise the Buxton Park conservation area.

Assessment and Impact

The application seeks to install 12 solar panels to the front roof elevation of no. 4A Devonshire Road. The application also includes associated battery storage to the side elevation.

Roofs within the conservation area are traditionally slate, however, no 4A has a concrete tile roof, which is not characteristic of the conservation area nor street scene. The front roof slope of no.4A can be viewed from the public domain and is continuous with the roof of the adjoining dwelling (no. 4).

Where solar panels are not considered to be permitted development, they are not generally considered acceptable for installation on the front elevation of a building within a conservation area due to the typically harmful visual impact upon the street scene. The placement of solar panels should be carefully considered to ensure that their visibility is limited and that the arrangement is uniform and symmetrical to ensure a neat appearance when viewed from the public domain.

Historic England have published Advice Note 18 Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency which states:

98. Installation of panels will generally not be acceptable on principal roof slopes, if they would be visible and would detract from the building's special interest

...

Exceptions may include buildings whose significance may be less sensitive to the installation of such panels (for example, certain industrial buildings). Steps should be taken to reduce the visual impact of panels in these locations as far as is possible. For example, using black frames, avoiding silvered or reflective

panels and avoiding irregular or stepped panel layouts (page 30)

Plans show the panels to be placed in a uniform and symmetrical pattern. However, no details of the appearance of the solar panels have been provided. Without details of the solar panels' appearance, in the form of a product specification, the impact of the proposed solar panels cannot be appropriately assessed. Therefore, the application lacks sufficient information to determine the impact upon the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Legislation and Policy

Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 72(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that with respect to any buildings or land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of that area.

National Planning Policy Framework

In determining applications, local authorities should take account of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation, the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality, the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness (par.210).

Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use. (para 215)

Local Development Framework

Consideration should also be given to the following documents and local development framework policies:

- High Peak Local Plan (Adopted 2016) – EQ7 Built and Historic Environment
- Buxton area character appraisal (adopted April 2007)

Conclusions and Recommendations

In summary, consideration must be given to the impact upon the character and appearance of the Buxton Park conservation area and street scene. In assessing this impact consideration should be given to the guidance of Historic England Advice Note

18. Advice Note 18 states that solar panels may be considered acceptable on a front or principal elevation of a building with low individual significance. No. 4a is part of a late 20th century development, which does not cohere to the overriding character of the conservation area as outlined above. However, without sufficient details of the proposed solar panels appearance, a full assessment of the proposal upon the character and appearance cannot be made. It is recommended that these details are requested and should be in line with Historic England Advice Note 18.

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