

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

HPK/2025/0419
Valid 25/11/2025

4A DEVONSHIRE ROAD
BUXTON

INSTALLATION OF 12X
SOLAR PANELS AND
ASSOCIATED BATTERY
STORAGE SYSTEMS AND
BMS/INVERTER EXTERNAL
TO THE BUILDING

(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)

MAIN ISSUES

- Design, character and appearance
- Impact upon residential amenity
- Impact upon the Heritage Asset (The Park Conservation Area)
- Nutrient Neutrality

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site refers to an end of terrace building located on Devonshire Road within the defined settlement boundary of Buxton.

The surrounding area is predominantly residential in nature comprising a mix of terraced, semi-detached and flatted properties. The site lies within the Park Conservation Area as well as an area covered by Article 4 Direction.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks full planning consent for the installation of 12 solar PV panels and a battery storage system.

The proposals solar panels are to be located in two rows of 6, to the front roof elevation of the property with the inverter mounted to the west facing side elevation. The application also includes a solar battery which is to be ground mounted, again on the western elevation.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

High Peak Local Plan 2016

S 1 Sustainable Development Principles

S 1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

EQ 1 Climate Change
EQ 6 Design and Place Making
EQ 7 Built and Historic Environment
CF 6 Accessibility and Transport

Supplementary Planning Documents

Residential Design Guide SPD (2005)
Design Guide SPD (2018)

National Planning Policy Framework

Chapter 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development
Chapter 12 - Achieving Well Designed and Beautiful Places

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

HPK/0000/9027: Proposed extension to kitchen bedroom and bathroom (Approved)
HPK/2016/0046: Proposed side extension over existing ground floor (Approved)

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 13/01/2026
Neighbour consultation period ends: 19/12/2025
Press Advert: 01/01/2026

Public Comments

One public comment has been received from Buxton Civic Association: (no objection).

Given the age and character of the building, the proposal would not affect a building of historic interest or character, and it would not have a harmful impact on its setting. No objection.

Town / Parish Comments

N/A.

Conservation Officer (Holding Objection removed)

Initial comments 02.01.2026

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.

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

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.

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.

Updated comments 09.01.2026

Details state that the panels will have a black aluminium frame which will reduce their visual impact as per Historic England guidance.

If minded to approve please include a condition requiring panels to be black with black frames only, as per the details provided. At this stage there are no further heritage comments to make.

Derbyshire County Council Highways (No Objection)

There appears to be no material impact on the public highway and therefore the Local Highway Authority (LHA) has no further comments to make.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

The application seeks full planning permission for an alteration to an existing residential property that lies within the built up area boundary for Buxton, which is identified as a Market Town under Policy S2 of the High Peak Local Plan (2016). Given the nature of the proposed development is deemed to be acceptable in principle subject to an assessment of material considerations such as design and the impact on the conservation area and residential amenity which are discussed in greater detail below.

Design, Character and Impact upon the Conservation Area

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, having regard to matters of scale, height, density, layout, appearance and materials.

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.

The High Peak Residential Design Guide SPD (2005) and more recently adopted

Design Guide SPD (2018) contains further design guidance for altering domestic properties. Alterations should respect the scale and height of the parent building reading as a subordinate and secondary addition and respecting the character and appearance of the building through an appropriate choice of materials.

The application site lies within the Park Conservation Area and has had householder permitted development rights removed by Article 4 direction.

It is noted that the site and the wider Devonshire road section is the least cohesive section of The Park Conservation Area given the comparative lack of trees and soft landscaping works further to the inclusion of modern flatted developments.

The submitted plans show that the solar panels would be arranged in a uniform and symmetrical pattern. Additionally, the existing dwelling comprises a concrete tile roof rather than the more traditional slate roof which is deemed to be uncharacteristic of the Conservation Area. The Conservation Officer during the course of the application requested additional details regarding the proposed solar PV units to determine whether they would comply with Historic England guidance. Additional information has since been submitted and it has been confirmed that the proposed solar PV panels would feature black aluminium frames which would reduce their visual impact in accordance with guidance from Historic England.

Whilst there would be some limited, less than substantial harm, upon the character of the Conservation Area the proposals would have some public benefit in the form of supporting renewable energy and aligns with Policy EQ1 to supporting low carbon technologies and energy sources to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

Consequently the proposed works are judged to sufficiently demonstrate that the benefits would outweigh the very limited harm upon the Conservation Area and wider street scene. Furthermore, the proposed development has been assessed to not have any detrimental impacts upon the character of the existing dwelling.

The proposed development accords with Local Plan Policies EQ6 and EQ7, the Design Guide SPD and national policy detailed in the NPPF.

Amenity

LP Policy EQ6 requires all new development to have a satisfactory relationship with existing land and buildings to protect the amenity of the area, which includes the residential amenity of neighbouring properties. Aspects of residential amenity include impacts such as a loss of sunlight, overshadowing and overbearing impacts, loss of outlook, and loss of privacy.

The proposed works would not create any extensions to the built footprint of the site or additional outlooks and only seeks consent with regard to the installation of solar panels to the roof pitch and a ground mounted solar inverter and battery pack. The Solar PV panels given the angled nature of the roof are not judged to result in any detrimental impacts upon neighbouring amenity with regard to glint and glare.

The proposals would therefore be in accordance with Local Plan Policy EQ6, the Residential Design Guide SPD and national policy contained within the NPPF.

Nutrient Neutrality

The site lies within the catchment of the River Wye which forms the Peak District Dales Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The Council has been notified that action must be taken to address exceedances of phosphorus in the River. As such, the Council cannot grant consent for development unless it can rule out “likely significant effects” on the SAC. A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) will be required when the plan or project creates a source of water pollution or has an impact on water quality and when it is within the catchment of the SAC. Initially, a screening assessment will be required to consider if “likely significant effects” (alone or in combination) on the SAC can be ruled out. If not, this will be followed by an “Appropriate Assessment” where the impact of the plan or project is considered in detail.

Screening Assessment

The proposal is not directly connected with or necessary for the conservation management of a European site. The proposal will not increase overnight stays or surface water run-off from the site. Therefore it will not risk having a significant negative effect on the SAC either on its own or in combination with other proposals and therefore it is not necessary to carry out an Appropriate Assessment.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The proposed development will not result in any adverse impacts upon visual or residential amenity and would not have any substantial harm to the character of the Conservation Area. The benefits outweigh the less than substantial harm to the conservation area. The proposals are in accordance with the relevant policies of the High Peak Local Plan, Supplementary Planning Documents and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Therefore the application is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : Approve

Case Officer: Stuart Talbot

Recommendation Date: 19/01/2026

X *J Colley*

Signed by: Jane Colley Signature

On behalf of High Peak Borough Council