
12. FULL APPLICATION – LOFT CONVERSION INCLUDING RAISING OF ROOF HEIGHT/NEW DORMER WINDOWS AT LYDGATE BUNGALOW, ASHOPTON ROAD, BAMFORD. (NP/HPK/0117/0074 420124 / 384571 P8430 SPW 25/01/2017)

APPLICANT: MR JOHN WALTON

Note: This application has been referred to the Planning Committee because the applicant is an Authority Member

Site and Surroundings

Lydgate Bungalow is located in the open countryside approximately 700m to the north-west of the edge of the settlement of Bamford. It is located on the west side of Ashopton Road on the eastern slope of the Derwent Valley. It lies at a lower level than Ashopton Road with the rear of the dwelling looks out over open countryside. As such the existing dwelling is not prominent from the adjacent highway but is very prominent in wider views in the landscape across the valley including for example views of the site from Carr Road and the popular Thornhill Trail route from Bamford to Ladybower.

The bungalow is constructed of natural gritstone, with a natural blue slate roof. There are no immediate neighbours. It was built following planning approval in 2001 which was tantamount to allowing a replacement dwelling as the previous dwelling was a timber framed single storey dwelling. Permitted development rights for alterations and extensions and outbuildings were removed from the site when the 2001 permission was granted.

The site lies outside the Bamford Lydgate Conservation Area which lies approximately 50m to the north on the east side of the Ashopton Road.

Proposal

The application proposes raising the height of the roof by 1.5m, 5 dormer windows are proposed and 7 rooflights and two circular windows, one in each of the main gable ends. There are also alterations to the front elevation to enlarge an existing window to create a doorway and on the rear elevation repositioning a window and blocking up of a doorway. The development proposed is to facilitate conversion of the roofspace to additional living accommodation. Although this application is not for a dwelling or ancillary dwelling it is noted that plans show the proposed accommodation would have all the facilities to enable it to function separately from the ground floor as a dwelling.

On the rear elevation the two dormer windows shown provide fully glazed patio type door with Juliet balcony. The openings are 2m tall by 1.5m wide and span across the wall and roof.

To the front there are three eaves dormer windows.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the application be REFUSED for the following reasons:

- 1. The proposed increase in height of the roof and addition of new elements within the roof will significantly increase the prominence of the building when viewed in the landscape. The proposed dormer windows would move the design of the building away from its existing simple character in a way which would not reflect the local vernacular or the Authority's Design Guide. Therefore the proposed design would harm the character and appearance of the existing building and have an adverse impact upon the wider landscape and the setting of the nearby Conservation Area. The proposal is contrary to the policies of the development plan including Core Strategy Policies GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, L1, L3 and Local Plan Policies LC4, LC5, LH4 and the Authority's SPDs the 'Design Guide' and the 'Detailed Design Guide for Alterations and Extensions' and the National Planning Policy Framework.**

Key Issues

Design and Amenity and impact of the proposal on the setting of the Conservation Area.

History

1979 – Application withdrawn for erection of car port stables workshop and dog shed.

1980 – Erection of garage and outhouse, granted conditionally.

1993 – Planning permission granted for stone cladding of timber dwelling. Retention of simple single storey form of the building was considered to be more appropriate than replacing it with a more traditional 1.5 to 2 storey form. Permitted development rights were removed. This permission was never implemented.

2001 – Planning permission granted for extension to dwelling and new roof and cladding of existing building. This application was dealt with as a replacement dwelling using Policy LH5 of the Local Plan. Permitted development rights were removed.

2016 – Pre-application advice in relation to current scheme being considered in this application. Plans showed loft conversion including raising the roof, introduction of dormer windows and rooflights. Officers advised that the existing bungalow is not a traditional vernacular dwelling but nevertheless retains a relatively simple form and massing and is clad with traditional materials including natural gritstone and blue slate. The single storey height and simple form and massing and use of traditional materials limits the impact of the building on the landscape. The proposal increases the eaves height by 1.5m, introduces several dormer windows and rooflights as well as two circular gable windows. The increase in height and addition of new elements within the roof will significantly increase the prominence of the building when viewed in the landscape. The proposed dormer windows would move the design of the building away from its simple character in a way which would not reflect the local vernacular or the Authority's Design Guide. Concern was therefore expressed that the design would harm the character and appearance of the building and have an adverse impact on the wider landscape. Officers felt that they could not support such an application. Advice was given that they should consider only marginally increasing the height of the eaves and lighting the accommodation with only a smaller number of rooflights.

Consultations

Highway Authority – No objection

High Peak Borough Council – No response to date.

Bamford with Thornhill Parish Council – No objections

Representations

To date no representations have been received.

Main Policies

Relevant Core Strategy policies: GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, GSP4, L1, L3.

Relevant Local Plan policies: LC4, LC5, LH4.

Core Strategy Policy GSP1 requires that all development should be consistent with the National Parks legal purpose and duty, to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Parks; and promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities (of the National Parks) by the public.

Policy GSP2 says that opportunities for enhancing the valued characteristics of the National Park will be identified and acted upon, and opportunities will be taken to enhance the National Park by the treatment or removal of undesirable features or buildings.

Policy GSP3 says that all development must conform to the following principles: development must respect, conserve and enhance all valued characteristics of the site and buildings that are subject to the development proposal.

GSP3 goes on to say, amongst other things, particular attention will be paid to: impact on the character and setting of buildings; scale of development appropriate to the character and appearance of the National Park; siting, landscaping and building materials; design in accordance with the National Park Authority design guide; impact on living conditions of communities.

L3 deals with heritage assets including Conservation Areas and requires that development must conserve and where appropriate enhance or reveal the significance of the heritage assets and their settings. Other than in exceptional circumstances development is not permitted that is likely harm the significance of a heritage asset.

Policies in the Core Strategy are also supported by saved Local Plan policies LC4, LC5 and LH4.

Local Plan Policy LC4 explains that if development is acceptable in principle it will be permitted provided that the detailed treatments are to a high standard that respects, conserves and where possible enhances the landscape, built environment and other valued characteristics of the area. Particular attention is paid to *inter alia* (i) scale, form, mass and orientation in relation to existing buildings, settlement form and character, and (ii) the degree to which design details, materials and finishes reflect or compliment the style and traditions of local buildings.

Local Plan Policy LC5 deals with development in Conservation Areas and also with development that affects the setting of a Conservation Area or important views into or out of the area. It requires that as part of the application it is demonstrated how the proposal will conserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The following matters are taken into account, form and layout of the area including views into or out of it and open spaces; scale, height, form and massing of the development and existing buildings to which it relates; locally distinctive design details including traditional frontage patterns and vertical or horizontal emphasis; the nature and quality of materials.

Local Plan Policy LH4 deals specifically with extensions and alterations to dwellings which includes outbuildings. An extension of this type would not be permitted if it detracted from the character, appearance or amenity of the original building its setting or neighbouring buildings or if it dominates a building of vernacular merit.

Design Guidance

As noted above, GSP3 of the Core Strategy requires the design of new development to be in accordance with the National Park Authority's adopted design guidance. The Authority's 'Design Guide' and 'Detailed Design Guide for Alterations and Extensions' have been adopted as SPDs and the 'Building Design Guide' is retained until it is replaced by technical appendices.

The Design Guide identifies local building traditions and materials and explains how to achieve a high standard of design which is in harmony with its surroundings.

Paragraph 7.2 explains that alterations need to be undertaken with care, insensitive changes can easily spoil a building. The key to a sensitive approach is to take note of what is there already before preparing the design and to work with and not against the buildings character.

Paragraph 7.7 discusses improvements to non traditional houses. It explains that the 1950 and 1960 building boom resulted in houses being built in the National Park which are neither of good or modern design. If alterations or extensions are being considered then this is a chance to improve their appearance and enhance the area.

The design guide explains that all extensions should harmonise with the character of the original building respecting the dominance of the original building and be subordinate in terms of its size and massing, setting back the new section from the building line and keeping the eaves and ridge lower than the parent will help (7.8).

Paragraph 10.3 explains that windows are amongst the most important features of an elevation. They are the buildings eyes, and as such deserve special care and attention. 10.4 There are many traditional window patterns found locally, nearly all have a vertical emphasis to their overall shape as well as some degree of subdivision to the frame.

Further guidance has been produced the Detailed Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document for alterations and extensions. Section 3 looks at house extensions in detail, explaining and illustrating how getting the design principles of massing, materials and detailing and style correct are important. Section 3.4 explains that the local vernacular tradition has very simple building forms, extensions should reflect this by being themselves simple forms without extensions or appendages.

Section 3.11 to 3.13 deals specifically with extensions upwards into the roofspace. Paragraph 3.11 explains that raising the eaves and/or ridge to increase head height is generally unacceptable. Adding a large flat roofed dormer is similarly unacceptable, even traditional, gabled dormers are not generally a feature of the Park and are therefore best avoided unless they are part of the building tradition in the village. Paragraph 3.12 explains that the best way to light a converted loft space is by adding small, well designed windows to the gables.

Paragraphs 2.9 to 2.11 deals with rooflights, explaining that they have the potential to be much more obtrusive in the street scene and out of keeping with the property. They should be used with caution. As with changes to walls of historic buildings the solid to void relationship of a roof is a crucial consideration as the abundance of traditional materials in village roofscapes provides a significant and valued feature which must be respected and managed with care. 2.10 explains that generally rooflights are best confined to rear roof slopes, where they will not impact on the building's main architectural composition. They should be kept to the minimum number and size

(fortunately they provide much more light than an equivalent sized window in a wall). They should also be placed below the mid-line of the roof rather than above it and be kept well away from verges and valleys. If located too close to the ridge, eaves or verges, rooflights tend to look out of place. The more roof there is around them, the better, so that they do not dominate. Their position should relate to what happens on the elevation below. A formal arrangement of window openings would imply a similar formality to the rooflights. They can be lined up with the windows beneath, or given an even spacing along the length of the roof. Also, if possible, use a 'conservation rooflight' with its slimmer framing and vertical dividing bar up the centre. The subdivision helps to visually reduce the scale of the opening and relate it to any small paned windows below.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The relationship between the Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework has also been considered and it is concluded that they are consistent because the NPPF recognises the special status of National Parks and promotes sustainable development sensitive to the locally distinctive character of its setting. Furthermore always seeking high quality design is one of the core planning principles set out in the NPPF at paragraph 17.

Assessment

Officers consider that a new chapter in the planning history of Lydgate Bungalow was opened when the redevelopment, which was tantamount to a replacement dwelling, was permitted in 2001. At this time permitted development rights were removed from the property.

The existing dwelling has a simple design using traditional materials which was a considerable enhancement in comparison to the timber dwelling that it replaced. The simple form and use of traditional materials ensured that the building enhanced the site.

What is proposed now increases the height of the dwelling by 1.5m. This is contrary to the advice in the Detailed Design Guide for Alterations and Extensions which explains that raising the eaves and/or the ridge to increase head height is generally unacceptable.

As this is a bungalow its existing form is quite long (15.2m). The increase in height would take the dwelling to a height considered to be 1.5 storey dwelling which goes against the original reasoning for allowing a replacement bungalow in 2001.

As a single storey bungalow the form of the existing dwelling sits fairly comfortably on the site. From Carr Road for example the dwelling is seen just above a tree line and its recessive coloured roof helps it assimilate into the landscape. Adding the additional height and alterations to the roof including dormer windows and rooflights would significantly increase the prominence of the building, not only from Carr Lane but particularly from the Thornhill Trail and other higher vantage points above on the footpaths up to the iconic Win Hill. This would exacerbate the landscape impact of the building due to the resultant form, massing and design, moving it further away from the local building traditions because of its form and the proposed alteration to the roof including the dormer windows and number of rooflights. In these regards the proposal is contrary to the 'Design Guide' and 'Detailed Design Guide for Alterations and Extensions'.

It is noted that within Bamford there are a number of dwellings with dormer windows, however none are known to have Juliet balconies as proposed here, nevertheless, the site is a significant distance away from the village of Bamford, and located within the open countryside. The fact that there are dwellings in Bamford with dormer windows is not considered to justify the dormer windows proposed here because of the sites location and the design of the proposal. Furthermore the impact of the alterations to the roof would be exacerbated by the number of rooflights proposed.

A single small window in the gable would be considered an acceptable solution to light a first floor, but a round portal type opening is not part of the local building tradition, nor part of the existing dwelling's character. Gable windows should therefore be simple rectangular shapes with vertical emphasis to reflect to the local building traditions and the advice in the 'Design Guide'.

It is noted that there has been pre-application advice on this proposal which advised that the design proposed would harm the character and appearance of the original dwelling, and increase its prominence in the landscape, resulting in harm to the character and appearance of the National Park landscape and the setting of the nearby Bamford (Lydgate) Conservation Area.

It should be noted that as the accommodation proposed would have all the facilities available for it to operate independently from the ground floor, if the application were approved, it would need a condition for clarity and the avoidance of doubt that the accommodation permitted shall be ancillary to and remain in the same planning unit as Lydgate Bungalow.

There are no immediate neighbours so the proposal will not adversely affect the amenity of other properties.

Conclusion

Considering the above the proposal is contrary to the policies of the development plan because its design would harm the character of the original dwelling and increase its prominence, resulting in harm to the National Park's landscape and the setting of the Conservation Area. The proposal is therefore contrary to Core Strategy Policies GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, L1, L3 and Local Plan Policies LC4, LC5, LH4 and the Authority's SPDs the 'Design Guide' and the 'Detailed Design Guide for Alterations and Extensions' and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Human Rights

Any human rights issues have been considered and addressed in the preparation of this report.

List of Background Papers (not previously published)

Nil