

**DATE INSPECTED: 11th January 2014 &
11th February 2014.**

Ribble Valley Borough Council

DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT - REFUSAL

Ref: MB

Application No:	3/2013/1060
Development Proposed:	Construction of a part two storey, part single storey side extension for residential accommodation at 70a Downham Road, Chatburn.

CONSULTATIONS: Parish/Town Council

Parish Council: No objections

CONSULTATIONS: Highway/Water Authority/Other Bodies

County Surveyor (Highways): No objection in principle but would require the provision of three off road parking spaces to be clearly demonstrated prior to the commencement of development.

CONSULTATIONS: Additional Representations

A total of 2.no letters have been received from nearby residents, their comments can be summarised as follows:

- The scale of the proposed extension would disrupt the Conservation Area.
 - The building has been used as offices and premises from which the owner runs his business.
 - A high number of vehicles park at the site including outside other dwellings.
 - Such a large extension will be out of keeping and detrimental to the area.
 - The proposal will block out light and space from my kitchen window.
 - Does the rule no longer exist where only a certain percentage of the property can be extended?
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RELEVANT POLICIES:

Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan
G1 – Development Control.
ENV16 – Conservation Areas
H10 – Residential Extensions.
SPG Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings.

Ribble Valley Core Strategy (Regulation 22 Submission Draft)
DMG1 – General Considerations.
DME4 – Protecting Heritage Assets.
DMH5 – Residential and Curtilage Extensions.

National Planning Policy Framework: Section 12.

Chatburn Conservation Area Appraisal.
Chatburn Conservation Area Management Guidance.

POLICY REASONS FOR REFUSAL:

Contrary to Policy G1 of DWLP and DMG1 of CS and SPG on Extensions and Alterations to

Dwellings.

COMMENTS/ENVIRONMENTAL/AONB/HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES/RECOMMENDATION:

Planning consent is sought for the erection of a part two-storey part single storey side extension at 70a Downham Road, Chatburn.

At present the existing property is a detached dwelling with a flat roof garage to the side. The two are linked by an enclosed walkway. Historically the property was a rural beat Police House that is believed to date from around the 1960s. The development site is located within the Chatburn Conservation Area and is situated to the North side of Downham Road set approximately 11m back from the highway. The existing dwelling is constructed from rendered elevations under slated roofs. The existing dwelling is not characteristic of the traditional buildings within the Conservation Area in terms of construction materials and design, but nevertheless the site is within a designated Conservation Area, which is a material consideration in the determination of this application.

The proposed development is to measure 4.8m x 9.9m at ground floor level whilst at first floor level the extension will measure 4.8m x 6.4m. The extension is to be constructed to an eaves height of approximately 5m and built to an overall ridge height of 7.6m. The development will be constructed from rendered elevations under dual pitch slated roofs. At ground floor there will be monopitched roofs used at the front and rear which will act to bridge the variation in the dimensions between the ground and first floors. The monopitched roof to the front will continue across the front of the dwelling to incorporate an overhanging porch detail.

Since the original submission was made the plans have been amended to address concerns that had been raised. These amendments included the removal of proposed bi-folding doors and rooflights to the front elevation of the proposed extension at ground floor. These were considered to be alien features that would appear incongruous on a principle elevation, increasing the prominence of the development. The overall projected width of the extension has also been reduced from 5.9m to 4.8m. This was to address concerns that the proposed side extension would appear over dominant when set against the original dwelling. It is considered that the proposal as now amended is more keeping with the existing dwelling and visually is better proportioned.

The proposed first floor element of the proposed extension would be set back from the principle elevation of the existing dwelling by 500mm and the ridge set down from that of the existing dwelling by 400mm. The inclusion of such features ensures that the proposed development does appear as a later subservient addition rather than an original feature.

It could also be argued that whilst being of no architectural or historic significance, and whilst not explicitly stated as a principle negative feature of the Conservation Area Appraisal the proposed development does represent an opportunity to renovate, modernise and update the existing property, which does not really make any particular contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area. The end result whilst remaining different to the general character of other buildings within the Conservation Area would prevent the existing building from falling into further disrepair and potentially becoming a greater harm to the Conservation Area.

The key considerations in the determination of this application are; the impact of the proposed development upon the character, setting and visual amenities of the existing dwelling. The impact of the proposed development upon the character, setting and visual amenities of the Conservation Area and what harm, if any, the development will have upon the residential amenity of the area.

It is apparent from visiting the site, that whilst the development site is located within the Chatburn Conservation Area. the existing dwelling is of no particular historic or architectural

significance. The design of the dwelling is not characteristic of the other dwellings on Downham Road, or elsewhere within the Conservation Area. Certainly the Conservation Area Appraisal identifies one of the strengths of the Conservation Area as being well kept properties. The proposed development whilst different in character could achieve this and improve the current situation.

As discussed above, the dwelling is set in excess of 10m back from the highway. The result of this being that the dwelling is relatively unsighted as you approach from the west. The development is slightly more prominent when approached from the east however the set back behind the building line of the other properties does aid in reducing the overall visual impact of the development upon the streetscene.

As discussed above the development would result in a substantial addition to the existing dwelling. It would certainly be greater than the guidance figure of 33% detailed within the adopted SPG. However the figures stated on such allowances are not intended to be prescriptive, they are intended only as a guide. As such whilst accepting that the proposed addition would be significant I do not consider it to be of such a scale and extent that would be considered to be harmful to the character, setting or visual amenities of the built environment.

Impact upon the character, setting and visual amenities of the existing dwelling and the wider Conservation Area:

In considering this application I am mindful of the provisions of Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the desirability of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Any development that adversely harms the character, setting and/or visual amenities of the Conservation Area would be considered to be unacceptable.

The proposed development would result in a substantial addition to this existing dwelling being made. This will result in the visual bulk and general mass of the property increasing.

However I do not consider that the proposed development would result in harm being caused to the Conservation Area. That would warrant refusal of consent on such grounds. It could be argued that the Conservation Area could be enhanced to a degree by virtue of the property being renovated and that the proposals would be an improvement. The general location of the property being set back within the general streetscene aids to reduce any adverse visual impact which may be caused.

Impact upon residential amenity:

In considering the proposed development and the impact it may have upon the residential amenity of the area; any development that would result in a neighbouring property being significantly overshadowed or overlooked would be considered to be unacceptable.

The nearest neighbouring properties to the proposed development would be No.72 Downham Road, a semi detached bungalow situated to the North East and No.52 Ribblesdale View to the north/north west of the application site.

Having visited the site and considered the submitted details, I am satisfied that the proposed development would not adversely harm the residential amenity of the property to the rear No.52 Ribblesdale View. This is by virtue of the orientation of the two properties relative to one another. The proposed development is positioned in manner that results in the window openings being directed through the gap that exists between No.52 Ribblesdale View and the detached garage of No.72 Downham Road, which is accessed from Ribblesdale View, both

sited to the North of the application site.

The proposed development will result in an increase in the overall height of built form by virtue of the introduction of a first floor. This will have an impact upon the neighbouring property of No.72 Downham Road resulting in a loss of natural light to a window in the opposing side elevation of No.72. From visiting the neighbouring property this window in question serves the kitchen area of the property, which is also used as a kitchen diner. I did note however during my visit that the side elevation window did allow for natural light to fall into the kitchen diner space owing to its orientation to the west. In addition to which there is a further window opening on the rear of the elevation of No.72 that serves the same room.

The determination that has to be made in this instance is whether this loss of natural light and overshadowing is considered to be of such significance as to warrant the refusal of planning consent on such grounds.

The Council's adopted SPG on Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings states; 'Any proposal which reduces the level of daylight available to habitable rooms in neighbouring properties, or which seriously overshadows a neighbour's garden is likely to be refused'. The SPG then goes on to define a habitable room as; 'normally a bedroom or a living room, but not a kitchen, unless a dining kitchen or a bathroom.

Therefore in the context of this application, when assessed against the provisions of the adopted SPG the kitchen of No.72, by virtue of being a kitchen diner would be considered to be a habitable room. I therefore consider that the proposed development would by virtue of its scale, design, mass and proximity to the neighbouring property would result in overshadowing and the loss of natural light to a habitable room, this would be contrary to the provisions of the adopted SPG and be harmful to the residential amenity of the occupants of No.72. This impact would principally be caused by the provision of a first floor on the proposed development and the resulting increase in height. The actual separation distance between the two properties would remain broadly the same at approximately 8.5m.

Therefore to conclude, whilst the proposed development would appear to be a significant addition to the existing property and will change the character of the existing dwelling and its relationship to the existing built environment; on balance I do not consider the proposed development to be harmful to the character, setting or visual amenities of the existing dwelling, or the wider built environment and Conservation Area. The development would result in the modernisation of the existing dwelling, which it could be argued would be advantageous.

However as discussed above, the proposed development would result in the loss of natural light and result in the overshadowing of a habitable room of a neighbouring property. This would be prejudicial to the residential amenity of the occupants of this dwelling to an extent that I feel would warrant the refusal of consent on such grounds. I therefore recommend accordingly.

RECOMMENDATION: That permission be refused.