

Planning Application 3/2021/0319 – Land adjoining 39 Clitheroe Road Whalley.

I write in connection with the recent application to seek approval for Design Amendments to the previous appeal decision which followed a long history of planning refusals on this site. In considering the Appeal, the Inspector weighed the proposal against a number of criteria, specifically openness, loss of greenspace and the impact on the nearby Conservation area. I feel if the Inspector had been present with this new proposal, he would conclude that the harm would now be too great. In summary, I have listed the issues of concern in respect of this scheme: -

- Substantially different proposal which is beyond consideration as a Design Amendment.
- Height, scale and massing. The proposed floor areas are now 3 time larger than the appeal decision approval.
- Impact on trees and hedges and the lack of an updated Arboricultural Report.
- The Boundaries and trees present on site have changed since the Appeal decision.
- Inappropriate development close to the Whalley Conservation Area.
- Expanded area for car parking, resulting in impact on mature landscaping and visual intrusiveness from Clitheroe Road.

Having reviewed the current proposal against the previously approved scheme it is now significantly higher and wider than what was previously proposed, the ridge height is now 9.8m as against 8.3m previously approved. An additional story has been added taking this from the approved two storey property to a three-storey building nearly 30 feet high. The total floor space is now over three times greater than what was previously proposed. This is unprecedented in the locality and is such a major deviation from what was accepted on appeal that this cannot simply be treated as a design amendment. Too much has changed from what was approved and too little remains of what was previously found to be acceptable, so a new full planning application would be needed to ensure that it contains adequate information before determination.

In terms of the width of the proposed building, the frontage will increase from 24m to 32m, a massive visual change when viewed from Clitheroe Road. This also means the building mass will sit within 2 metres of the Southern boundary. The design also introduces 7 new windows into the Northern elevation whereas the approved schemes had none.

The appropriateness of the design is a matter of subjectivity, it seems commercial in its typology and in so far as one can tell also in the choice of proposed materials. No Design and Access Statement is provided which makes interpretation of the limited information contained on the revised plans difficult but the use of structural glazing and black cladding in such a visible manner has no precedents in this locality nor within the adjoining Conservation areas. I am aware significant efforts have been made nearby to make sure such material are not evident from the roadside view of other recent developments.

Another concern with this application is the resubmission of the 2018 Arboricultural Impact assessment Report which is clearly no longer helpful in considering this proposal. The buildings proximity to the Southern boundary has massively changed as have the site boundaries to the North. In addition, the removal of numerous trees by the previous applicant makes this report next to useless in assessing the impact of the proposal as it no longer reflects what is on site nor the proposed new building form. There is simply not enough relevant information upon impact following this massive increase in scale nor intended boundary treatments to be able to determine what impact this proposal will have.