The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 February 2020

by R Norman BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/C3240/D/19/3234294
2C Wesley Road, Ironbridge, Telford TF8 7PE

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Ms Naomi Roberts against the decision of Telford and Wrekin Council.
- The application Ref TWC/2019/0321, dated 31 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 13 June 2019.
- The development proposed is a timber shed.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The shed which is the subject of this appeal has already been placed on site. I am therefore considering this on a retrospective basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the development preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the Ironbridge Gorge Conservation Area and the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site.

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises a residential terraced property and associated rear garden. The property forms the end terrace of a row of traditional Victorian dwellings. Jockey Bank runs directly to the side of appeal site, which is bounded by a low-level brick wall. The land levels rise significantly from the junction of Wesley Road and Jockey Bank giving the rear garden a degree of prominence. To the rear of the garden is an access point and parking area. The shed is in position and comprises a modest timber structure.

5. The appeal site falls within the Ironbridge Gorge Conservation Area which is included on the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites. The appeal site is also within an area covered by an Article 4(2) direction restricting permitted development rights.

6. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. In addition, the designation of a World Heritage Site highlights the international importance of places and their significance as areas of outstanding universal

value. Accordingly, the appeal site is located within an area with a high level of protection.

7. The shed is in a prominent location as a result of the topography of the rear garden and boundary treatments. It is highly visible from a number of positions along Jockey Bank and from Wesley Road. Although of a domestic scale and appearance, the shed appears at odds with the surrounding area as a result of its design and timber materials, which do not reflect the traditionally designed properties and prominence of brick in the surrounding area. The shed therefore appears unduly prominent and out of character with the surroundings.

8. The shed is visible against the backdrop of the nearby Listed Building. I note the Appellant's comments in relation to the current condition of the Listed Building however I do not find that this is sufficient to justify the retention of the shed in this instance. I have also carefully considered the potential for the timber to be stained with a dark colour, addition of roof tiles and future planting. However, these would not be sufficient to satisfactorily minimise the prominence of the shed and its impact on its surroundings due to its location and elevation.

9. Consequently, whilst I have sympathy with the need for storage for cycles and domestic items, the shed in this location does not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, which is a fundamental requirement for sites within these areas and in a World Heritage Site. Whilst this would result in a less than substantial harm, the identified benefits in terms of the improvements to the garden and promoting a healthy lifestyle would not result in public benefits which would outweigh the identified harm.

10. Accordingly, the development fails to comply with Policies BE1, BE2, BE3 and BE5 of the Telford and Wrekin Local Plan 2011 - 2031 (2018). Collectively, these seek to ensure that development respects and responds positively to the quality and context of the area, protects and enhances the Outstanding Universal Value of the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site and preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, amongst other things. It would also fail to accord with the aims of Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019).

Other Matters

11. I note the other examples of sheds and timber structures in the surrounding area, however I have limited details of these and their contexts. I am therefore unable to conclude that these are wholly comparable to the appeal site and development and I can therefore only give these limited weight.

12. I have also had regard to the local support received in relation to the original application however this is not sufficient to outweigh the harm I have identified above.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, and having carefully considered all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

R Norman

INSPECTOR