



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 10 August 2021

by R E Jones BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 August 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/B9506/D/21/3268254

54a Brookley Road, Brockenhurst, Hampshire SO42 7RA

- 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 Miss Christine Sharpe against the decision of New Forest National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref 20/00578, dated 8 April 2020, was refused by notice dated 17 November 2020.
 - The development proposed is erection of summerhouse/bicycle store.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for the erection of summerhouse/bicycle store at 54a Brookley Road, Brockenhurst, Hampshire SO42 7RA in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 20/00578 dated 8 April 2020, and the plans submitted with it subject to the following condition:
 1. The development hereby approved shall only be used for purposes incidental to the dwelling on the site and shall not be used for habitable accommodation such as kitchens, living rooms and bedrooms.

Preliminary Matters

2. It was noted during my site visit that the summer house/bicycle store has already been erected and is consistent with the submitted drawings. Therefore, I have determined the appeal on the basis that the appellant is seeking permission for what is now in place.
3. The appeal site is located within the Brockenhurst Conservation Area (BCA). I have therefore attached considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area in accordance with section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether or not the development will preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the BCA.

Reasons

5. No 54a Brookley Road (No 54a) comprises a modern two-storey, end of terrace dwelling situated between a Bowling Green to the north and a large public car park to the south. The appeal development is located within No 54a's shallow rear garden which is separated from the car park by a wooden boundary fence.

6. The special features of the BCA include historic Victorian and Edwardian dwellings and the ornate timber shopfronts that line the busy Brookley Road. In contrast, the appeal dwelling is part of a modern terrace in a small plot that fails to fully replicate the detailing and use of materials of the older buildings that contribute to the BCA's special character.
7. In terms of the immediate surroundings, the adjoining public car park has a bland and engineered appearance, while the many parked vehicles, which I saw during my site visit, have a detracting presence in this part of the BCA. Moreover, the built development that borders the car park includes, a public convenience building along with service yards, wheelie bins and modern rear additions that relate to the commercial properties that line Brookley Road. Collectively these lack any special architectural merit. In addition, the Authority's Character Appraisal¹ does not refer to any listed or unlisted buildings nearby that might otherwise, in so far, as they would relate to this appeal, make an important contribution to the area. Therefore, the appeal site and its immediate surroundings, do not encapsulate any of the key characteristics or distinctive features that contribute to the BCA's significance.
8. The proposed store building is located a short distance from No 54a's rear elevation. With a floor area of approximately 1.8m² and a height of around 2.4m, it has modest proportions compared to the dwelling, which has a much greater mass and height. Accordingly, it does not appear overtly prominent in the context of the host property or the terrace it relates to.
9. The building's rectangular form possesses a functional and utilitarian appearance. It is largely screened from the adjacent car park, yet the building's roof is visible above the host property's boundary enclosure. In this regard, it is acknowledged that its flat roof appears somewhat thickset. But its dark colour and linear profile assimilates well with the horizontal black barge boarding finish on the dwelling's rear elevation, thus reducing its prominence from nearby vantage points. Moreover, given the presence of other unremarkable additions and outbuildings that border the adjacent car park, the proposal will not be wholly inconsistent or appear out of place in context with this prevailing character.
10. Overall, the development makes no positive contribution or enhancement to the BCA, but nonetheless does not harm its special character. It therefore has a neutral effect upon the heritage asset. As a consequence, it will preserve the character of the Brockenhurst Conservation Area and accord with the provisions of Policies DP2, SP16, SP17, DP18 and DP37 of the New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016-2036 (August 2019). These require, amongst other considerations, that proposals relate to the surroundings, do not result in unacceptable adverse impacts on the built environment, do not harm the significance of heritage assets or key features that contribute to the qualities of the National Park. The proposal is also compliant with the National Planning Policy Framework where it relates to local character (paragraph 130), conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty of National Parks (paragraph 176) and conserving heritage assets (paragraph 197). The proposal also complies with the principles of the National Design Guide in responding to existing character and identity.

¹ Brockenhurst, The Weirs and Sway Conservation Character Appraisals

Conditions

11. I have included a condition restricting the building to incidental uses, so that it is not used for other domestic activities that would be detrimental to nearby amenities. There is no requirement for a plans condition as I was satisfied that the submitted drawings matched the building I saw on site.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given I conclude that the appeal should succeed.

RE Jones

INSPECTOR