



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 May 2022

by T J Burnham BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11th May 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/Q9495/W/21/3288080

Galesyke Wood, Nether Wasdale, Seascale, Cumbria CA20 1ET

- 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 Mr Paul White against the decision of Lake District National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref 7/2021/4103, dated 8 August 2021, was refused by notice dated 19 October 2021.
 - The development proposed is the construction of a wooden shed for storing equipment and tools securely for maintaining woodland.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The dimensions of the shed are included on the application form but are also clearly detailed on the plans which accompany the proposal and as such are omitted from the banner heading above. The bulk of the description has been adopted by the appellant on their appeal form.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the shed on the character and appearance of the area and whether it is necessary for the purposes of forestry.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The shed, which would be finished in larch waney edge would measure approximately 2.1x1.5m with a height between 2 and 2.1m. It would be placed within the northern corner of Galesyke Wood, which is set within Wasdale to the southwest of West Water. The site falls within the Lake District National Park (NP) and the Lake District World Heritage Site (WHS).
5. The setting is highly attractive, with the lowland pastoral and wooded landscape well framed by the looming high ground rising above the banks of West Water. Other than traditional stone walling, the broad lack of man-made structures is notable in this location giving the site a tranquil and natural character and appearance.
6. Within this context, the shed, which in spite of the proposed materials, would have a domestic and urban appearance which would be entirely at odds with the rural character of the area.

7. The branches of adjacent trees when in leaf may offer some limited screening and I accept that the shed would not be obviously visible from the public highway.
8. However, it would be clearly visible above the stone wall from the Public Right of Way running past the site which would mean that unlike the existing storage boxes, it would have a high degree of visibility and would not be the type of structure that one would expect to see in such a setting.
9. The shed would therefore jar and contrast with the attractive setting which contributes so positively to both the landscape value of the NP and the significance of the WHS which in part sits with the harmony of the landscape and its glaciated valleys and steep hillsides. I do not consider that there are any public benefits to weight against the harm to the designated heritage asset.
10. The proposal would therefore harm the character and appearance of the area. It would conflict with policies 01, 05 and 06 of the Lake District National Park Local Plan (2021) (LP) which amongst other things require proposals of design excellence which at a minimum protect the authenticity, integrity and significance and conserve and enhance the extraordinary beauty and harmony of the Lake District.

Whether necessary

11. It is clear that the woodland is subject to management and is attractive in its own right. However, the woodland only covers a very modest area and the evidence provides far from clear information that a structure much larger than the storage that currently appears to be used is justified.
12. Further, the number of trips that are required to manage the woodland are not clear, but given the size of the woodland, there is nothing to suggest that frequent visits are required for management purposes.
13. I do not therefore consider that the shed is necessary for the management of the woodland. The proposal therefore conflicts with Policy 02 of the LP which details when proposals within the open countryside will be supported. One such circumstance would be where the application demonstrates it is necessary for forestry use.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

14. One of the purposes of National Parks is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area¹, which this proposal would fail to achieve. The Framework² at para 176 states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks.
15. There is no indication that the decision should be made otherwise than in accordance with the development plan. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

T J Burnham

INSPECTOR

¹ Section 11A(2) of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (as amended).

² National Planning Policy Framework 2021.