



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 November 2024

by Jane Smith MA MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29th November 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/C3810/D/24/3344420

Pebbles, 60 Highcroft Crescent, Bognor Regis, West Sussex PO22 8DU

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Tim Walters against the decision of Arun District Council.
 - The application Ref is BR/4/24/HH.
 - The development proposed is described as '6ft wide x 6ft high x 14ft long wooden shed on the front driveway non permanent structure all timber construction'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. In the banner heading above, I have taken the description of the proposed development from the application form. The decision notice referred to 'installation of a front wooden shed' and the appeal form referred to 'installation of a wooden shed to the side of the property'. For the avoidance of doubt, the plans before me show that the shed would be sited forward of the dwelling and slightly to one side, parallel to the gravel driveway.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. Highcroft Crescent is within an estate of similar bungalows, of modest proportions, with shallow pitched roofs. They are in a regular layout and a fairly consistent distance back from the street. Front boundaries are mostly defined by dwarf walls, although some have low fences or hedges. As a consequence of the low-lying boundary treatment, single storey buildings and wide grass verges, the street scene has a markedly open, spacious character.
5. The appeal site is at a corner, with distinctive front boundary treatment comprising short sections of railway sleeper, above which most of the plot is open to public view. The proposed shed would project well forward of the bungalow, with one corner almost touching the front boundary. This is entirely untypical of the street scene, in which outbuildings are generally set further back. Indeed, the garage on the appeal site is in a much less prominent position, behind the predominant building line.
6. Care has been taken over the design, which would resemble that of an historic railway carriage. The height and width would be fairly modest. Nevertheless,

at over 4 metres long the shed would have a significant visual presence. It would be in a conspicuous location, on the outside of a bend in the road. There is no established pattern of outbuildings in front gardens, and a building of the proposed scale in this position would look incongruous and harmfully erode the open character of the street scene.

7. The Arun District Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document advises against extensions which project forward of the predominant building line, saying that care should be taken not to disrupt the existing composition of the street. While the shed would be a separate structure, not an extension to the bungalow, it would conflict with those principles.
8. At the time of my site visit, the camper van on the front driveway would have largely screened the shed in one direction. However, there would be no similar screening in the other direction, or when the camper van is elsewhere, and this does not adequately mitigate the effect on the street scene.
9. Taking account of the distinctively open, spacious character of the street scene and the scale and position of the shed, I conclude that the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. It would conflict with Policies D DM1 and D SP1 of the Arun Local Plan 2018 which require, amongst other things, that development reflects or improves upon the character of the site and surrounding area, taking account of matters including scale, siting and layout.

Other Matters

10. I recognise that the miniature steam engine referred to is likely to benefit from secure indoor storage. While there is an existing garage of a reasonable size, it may be in use for other purposes. However, the appellant has acknowledged that a box trailer could be an alternative, albeit less ideal, solution. If so, this may be taller, and is likely to be similarly visible. However, it would not be a fixed structure, and would not necessarily need to be positioned so far forward. Taking that into account, the manner in which the proposal would address the appellant's current storage requirements does not outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the area.
11. Although Bognor Regis Town Council raised concerns about the effect on occupiers of neighbouring properties, there were no objections from affected residents. Close neighbours did not apparently raise any concerns when consulted directly by the appellant. However, since the proposed shed would be visible across a widespread area, I cannot be confident that it would be universally welcomed, and the absence of objection does not outweigh the conclusions reached above.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, the appeal should be dismissed.

Jane Smith

INSPECTOR