



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 23 April 2025

by **A James BSc (Hons) MA MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8 May 2025

Appeal A: APP/C3810/W/24/3352766

The Old Farmhouse, Toddington Lane, Littlehampton, West Sussex BN17 7PN

- 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 Mr David West against the decision of Arun District Council.
 - The application reference is LU/191/24/HH.
 - The development is described as 'proposed removal of vehicle housing structure, formed by steel frame and fabric exterior, and replacing with single storey timber secure garage of less height than existing, within the grounds of a listed building.'
-

Appeal B: APP/C3810/Y/24/3352757

The Old Farmhouse, Toddington Lane, Littlehampton, West Sussex BN17 7PN

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mr David West against the decision of Arun District Council.
 - The application reference is LU/192/24/L.
 - The works are described as 'proposed removal of vehicle housing structure, formed by steel frame and fabric exterior, and replacing with single storey timber secure garage of less height than existing, within the grounds of a listed building.'
-

Decisions

1. Appeal A is dismissed.
2. Appeal B - Listed Building Consent is not required for the works. I therefore take no further action in connection with this appeal.

Preliminary Matters

3. There are two appeals on this site, relating to the same scheme. Appeal A relates to the planning application and Appeal B to the listed building consent. Section 1(5) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) states that a listed building includes any object or structure fixed to the building and any free-standing object or structure erected before 1 July 1948 within the curtilage of the listed building. The existing 'vehicle housing structure' is a modern addition. It is not fixed to the listed building nor satisfies the above definition of a curtilage structure. Therefore, listed building consent is not required for this proposal and it has not been necessary for me to determine Appeal B.
4. As the appeal site forms part of the setting of a listed building, I have had special regard to section 66(1) of the Act.

5. Since the Council issued its decision notices, the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) has been revised, with the latest version published on 12 December 2024 and updated on 7 February 2025. Those parts of the Framework most relevant to the appeal proposal remain broadly the same. As a result, I have not sought further submissions on the revised Framework and I am satisfied that no party has been prejudiced by my approach.

Main Issue

6. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve the setting of a Grade II listed building, known as 'Toddington Farmhouse' (Ref: 1353802).

Reasons

7. 'Toddington Farmhouse' is a Grade II listed building, which dates back to the 16th century. It is two storeys high and constructed of flint with red brick dressings. It has distinctive crow-stepped gables and chimney breasts at each end. It features quoins and has a stringcourse. It also has traditional joinery details.
8. Based on my site visit and the evidence before me, I find that the listed building's special interest insofar as is relevant to these appeals is derived from its historic and architectural interest as an illustration of 16th century, domestic architecture. The building's surviving historic fabric, its use of traditional materials and its pleasing architectural design make important contributions in these regards.
9. The proposal seeks to remove the existing 'vehicle housing structure' and replace it with a new garage. The existing structure has a steel frame and a fabric cover. Given its structure and materiality, it appears of a temporary nature that has been erected relatively recently. The proposed garage would be timber clad (natural stain), with bitumen roof tiles. Its modern, log cabin-style design and materiality would harmfully contrast with the architecture and traditional materials found on the listed building.
10. The proposal would be sited to the front of the listed building and would be closer to the highway than the existing structure. I appreciate that the proposed garage would be modest in size and lower in height than the existing structure. In addition, it would be partially screened from the public realm by the existing boundary treatment and soft landscaping. However, the proposed garage would be highly visible from the access to the property and would partially obscure views of the listed building when viewed from the road. Nonetheless, listed buildings are safeguarded for their inherent architectural and historic interest irrespective of whether or not public views of the building can be gained.
11. The appellant states that based on the Block Plan there appears to have been a building in the location of the proposed garage. However, there is limited information before me in this respect. Furthermore, there is no permanent building on this site at present. Consequently, I give this argument limited weight in my decision.
12. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the proposal would fail to preserve the setting of the Grade II listed building. I find the harm to be less than substantial, but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight. In accordance with paragraph 215 of the Framework, that harm should be weighed against any public benefits of the proposal.

13. The removal of the existing structure would enhance the setting of the listed building. However, as this structure is of a temporary nature, I give its removal limited weight in my decision. Nevertheless, I find that the proposal by reason of its permanent nature and unsympathetic design and materials would fail to preserve the setting of the listed building.
14. The appellant states that they have been advised by the Police and Neighbourhood Watch Group to provide a more secure garage. The proposal would provide improved and more secure garage accommodation for the appellant, which is largely a private benefit. There is limited evidence before me of the public benefits that would arise from this proposal. Nevertheless, I acknowledge that the proposal has the potential to help reduce crime and I give this limited weight as a public benefit.
15. There would be a small economic benefit from the proposal during the construction of the development, which I give limited weight in my decision as a public benefit.
16. Overall, the proposed public benefits carry limited weight in favour of the development. As a result, the collective public benefits are insufficient to outweigh the great weight afforded to the preservation of heritage assets.
17. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the proposal would fail to preserve the setting of a Grade II listed building. The proposal would fail to accord with the requirements of the Act and the historic environment policies of the Framework. The proposal would also conflict with Policies HER DM1 and HER SP1 of the Arun Local Plan 2011 - 2031, adopted July 2018. These policies among other things require that listed buildings and their settings should be conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance.

Other Matters

18. I note that the Parish Council raises no objections to the proposal. However, this does not alter my findings set out above.

Conclusion

19. For the reasons given above, the proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no other material considerations, including the Framework, that would outweigh that conflict. Therefore, I conclude that Appeal A should be dismissed.

A James

INSPECTOR