

**ADC Planning Consultation
Response from the Conservation Officer**

Application Number	BE/61/14/HH
Address	99 North Bersted, Bognor Regis
Description	Two storey extension.
Case Officer	Janice Chapman

The property is an attractive structure that research has been identified as being present on the Tithe map (1842). As a consequence, it is of an age that warrants consideration for designation as a statutorily listed building. Whilst not currently listed, great weight should be given to its preservation. Therefore, for this application, it should be treated as a non-designated Heritage Asset for the purposes of planning policy as identified in the NPPF.

Heritage Assets are defined in the National Planning Policy Framework as:

“A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing)”.

It should be noted that the same tests for change and alteration apply to both designated and non-designated heritage assets in terms of whether the special interest and character is being preserved. Consequently, the authority should have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest it possesses.

As the property is located within a conservation area, it also has the duty to ensure that any works preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area.

Failure to conserve a building's significance not only harms its integrity, but is also contrary to the delivery of sustainable development as identified in the NPPF.

Extensions can significantly affect the character, appearance and setting of a property. Heritage Assets can sometimes be extended, provided that the addition is sympathetic in design and materials and respect is shown towards the proportions of the original building (Generally, extensions should be smaller than the existing dwellings).

However, given the potential historical importance, scale, character and age of the property, the proposal is considered extremely problematic. The proposed extension is a substantial structure (it reads as if doubling the size of the cottage) which is considered to both overwhelm the existing property and damage its original character. It therefore is not subservient to the existing property.

Every building has a finite capacity for extension; that is to say that some buildings cannot accommodate an extension due to their particular architectural design, simple vernacular form or their location. It is considered that this property, due to its contained, small scale nature, with a substantial, attractive thatched roof, is one such example.

The extension would also result in a new opening to link the existing property to the extension, and the loss of historic fabric.

Further, the complexity of the extension is also problematic, for example as witnessed in the means by which the front entrance door and porch are treated.

Furthermore, the Conservation Area Statement notes “One of the main objectives of designation is to ensure that the street retains its identity and that all development adjacent to the Conservation Area or within it, relates in form and scale to the existing buildings”. It is considered that the proposal fails to achieve this.

The NPPF requires an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. It states that: ‘the level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance’. This will normally involve an assessment of the property, the proposal and the perceived impacts. This application fails to provide this analysis.

It is therefore considered that the proposal does not:

- show an understanding of the heritage significance of the building and its setting
- seek to minimise any harm to the locally listed building’s significance
- appear to be a subservient structure

Conclusion

The *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) which provides a presumption in favour of sustainable development, states that one of the core principles that underpin decision-taking is that planning should conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, for current and future generations. Some heritage assets present bigger challenges for adding extensions than others because of their sensitivity to change. This property is considered to be very sensitive to any substantial change, such as that proposed. Consequently, it is considered that an extension should be objected.

Relevant policies:

Arun District Local Plan 2003:
Area 2: Conservation Areas

Emerging Local Plan 2014:
HER SP1: The historic environment
HER DM3: Conservation Areas

Relevant SPD’s:

Conservation Areas Supplementary Planning Guidance Note

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