

Arun District Council, Civic Centre, Maltravers Rd, Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 5LF

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From: Martyn White <Martyn.White@arun.gov.uk>
Sent: 22 October 2021 16:06
To: Planning.Responses <Planning.Responses@arun.gov.uk>
Subject: BR/194/21/HH

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21 West Street Bognor Regis PO21 1XA

Erection of first floor home office above existing outbuilding. This application may affect the character and appearance of The Steyne, Bognor Conservation area. This application may affect the setting of a Listed Building.

The Conservation area contains two squares: The Steyne which is an open-ended rectangle at right angles to the sea, lined with two and three storey terraced houses with bay windows and balconies; and Waterloo Square which consists of a central open space, flanked by nearly continuous, street fronted, development. Buildings are a mixture of 2 and 3 storeys high and reflect the period in which the town developed as a seaside resort.

The area also contains several small/narrow service streets or roads, with smaller cottage style buildings, where the scale contrasts with the large, formal space of the main squares. Within the Conservation Area there are some brick buildings, but the predominant material is stucco/render. Chimneys are important features on the skyline.

The Proposal

The proposal is for a first-floor home office above an existing outbuilding, along with minor external alterations to the ground floor. This building faces on to Sadler Street which is one of the smaller service roads. Small scale two storey buildings directly abut the street and there is no provision for paving. The existing building is of a simple, if basic, design that does not contribute towards the character of the street or area. Whilst the new extension would be clearly visible on the street-scene, it would abut a similar two storey element of simple appearance. It would therefore not be out of character.

I note from the plans that the roof will be natural slate and there will be two conservation style rooflights, both of which are positive features. The development would also help to improve the condition of the area and hopefully encourage other improvements along the street. The only area of concern relates to the proposed materials for the exterior walls and windows. The first floor would be clad with a modern material; cream composite cladding. A review of those buildings in the street has identified that the majority of them appear to be rendered and painted as opposed to clad. The use of such material would therefore be out of character with the remainder of the street. However, it would appear to reflect the rear elevation of the existing main dwelling. Whilst this might be the case, I believe that something more in keeping will help to reflect the character/appearance of the street, whilst also allowing for it to evolve and improve.

It would appear that the intention is for the windows and French windows to be UPVC. UPVC is not a traditional, vernacular material and is unsuitable for use in historic buildings. Such windows are often crudely detailed, and the size of frame is usually much larger than that of a traditional window, giving them an obtrusive, 'chunky' appearance. The 'shiny' finish of uPVC is also out of keeping with traditional materials. The use is therefore not appropriate for a conservation area.

Conclusion

Whilst the intention to improve the building and hopefully encourage other residents to improve their own is positive, there are some concerns regarding the use of materials, which are not appropriate for the conservation area. Therefore, unfortunately, at the present time I am of the opinion that the proposal is such that the impact can be described as causing less than substantial harm in accordance with paragraph 202 of the NPPF (2021). The level of harm is considered to be on the lower end of the scale. As such, you will also need to consider the public benefits that the development may achieve as part of your assessment of the application, along with the contents of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended).

Martyn White

Principal Conservation Officer,
Planning Services



Please note: I work on Conservation for half of the working Week (all day Monday and Friday and Tuesday Afternoons)

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