The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 May 2014

by S Holden BSc MSc CEng MICE TPP MRTPI FCIHT

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 21 May 2014

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3805/D/14/2216508
7 Hardy Close, Shoreham-By Sea, West Sussex BN43 5SA

- 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 Brian Thomas against the decision of Adur District Council.
- The application Ref AWDM/0113/14 was refused by notice dated 24 March 2014.
- The development proposed is renewing front balcony balustrade with new marine grade stainless steel posts and high grade opaque panels.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. Hardy Close is a cul-de-sac characterised by short terraces of two-storey properties with a uniform design. Each house has a pitched roof and an integral flat roof garage that projects beyond the front elevation on which is a small terrace enclosed by lightweight open railings. These common features provide a strong sense of rhythm and uniformity to the street scene.

4. The properties date from the 1960s and the materials used in the construction of the balconies are therefore approaching the end of their useful life. This is partially as a consequence of the exposed position of the area, which is in close proximity to the sea. The proposal seeks to replace the existing metal railings with stainless steel posts and opaque glass panels.

5. In the context of the consistent design and appearance of the existing balconies, the introduction of a different style and materials would be highly visible from the remainder of the street. The use of opaque panels would introduce a sense of enclosure to the balcony, increasing its visual prominence in relation to the host property and the surrounding area. In my view this would appear incongruous and would be disruptive to the repetitive features that characterise this residential estate. On my site visit I saw that in some places other balconies have been replaced. The introduction of new elements such as thicker posts, different materials and even modest changes to the height of the panels has affected the appearance of individual buildings with adverse consequences for the terraces as a whole.

6. I appreciate that the appellant intends the replacement balustrade to have the same dimensions as the original and wishes to make use of materials that may be more able to withstand the elements in this exposed location. However, the illustrations submitted with the application did not satisfy me that the overall appearance of the balcony would replicate the existing design with its closely spaced railings. It would therefore fail to integrate effectively into the street scene.

7. I therefore conclude that the proposed replacement balcony would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area. It would be contrary to saved Policy AH7 of the Adur District Local Plan, which requires the design and materials used in alterations to dwellings to be sympathetic to the both the original building and the area in general.

8. The Government also attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. The National Planning Policy Framework advises that development of poor design, which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area, should be refused. This confirms my view that the proposal is unsatisfactory. I have also had regard to the Planning Practice Guidance published on 6 March 2014, but in the light of the facts of this case find that it does not alter my conclusion.

9. For this reason, and having regard to all other relevant matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Sheila Holden

INSPECTOR