Expiry Date - 16/11/2010

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: ADC/0314/10 **Recommendation – Permit Application**

Site: **6 Westout Cottages Upper Brighton Road Sompting Worthing**

Proposal: **Pitch-roofed summerhouse (with storage in roofspace) at end of rear garden (retrospective)**

The Application

The application property is an end of terrace dwelling at the western end of Sompting village. The dwelling has a long rear garden, 57m in length and 7m wide, with agricultural land to the west and north with the A27 beyond. Retrospective planning permission is sought to retain a pitched roof, timber summerhouse at the north end of the rear garden. It sits on a raised plinth and measures 3.55m deep, 4.7m wide and 4.2m high. There are double glazed oak effect patio doors and a dormer window facing west. There is also an obscure double glazed window at first floor looking south towards the applicant's house. The roof space has a low 1.2m high ceiling and is stated to be used for storage.

The site lies within the Sompting Conservation Area.

Consultations and Representations

Consultations/Comments

Sompting Parish Council – Object for the following reasons:

1. It is in a conservation area (or immediately adjacent to it) and due to its size is detrimental to the amenity of the area.

2. It is too large in size for the purpose of a summerhouse and could be used for residential/office use.

ADCAG – Design leaves much to be desired, particularly the poor roof cover

Third Parties

1 letter received from the occupier of 4 Westout Cottages stating that he does not wish to formally object but does hope that consideration will be given to the size of the structure which he considers is too large and does not blend in

with its surroundings. His garden is now in shade. A normal sized summerhouse would be more in keeping with the width of the gardens.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996): AC1, AB4, AH7
PPS1 'Delivering Sustainable Development (ODPM 2005)
PPS5 'Planning for the Historic Environment' (DCLG 2010)

Planning Assessment

Policies

Policy AB4 of the Local Plan states new developments within Conservation Areas will be required to be of a high standard of design and construction materials to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the particular Conservation Area.

Policy AH7 of the Local Plan states that extensions and alterations should be designed so as not to result in an unacceptable degree of overlooking, a loss of natural light or an overbearing effect on neighbouring dwellings. They should be of sympathetic design and materials to the original dwelling and the area in general. The proportion of the garden area taken up by a proposal should not be excessive.

Government policy is set out in Planning Policy Statement PPS1 'Delivering Sustainable Development'. Relevant paragraphs are 17, which refers to the commitment to protecting and improving the environment; 18 which states that planning should seek to maintain and improve the local environment and help to mitigate the effects of declining environmental quality through positive policies on issues such as design; and 34 which states that good design is indivisible from good planning and that design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area, should not be accepted.

Visual amenity and Character

The summerhouse is a large building with a steeply pitched roof and its visual impact is exacerbated by the dormer window on the west roofslope. It is considered that this window is inappropriate in this building as its results in a more substantial and residential appearance. As the roofspace is to be used for storage only it is considered that a rooflight would be adequate for the purpose of providing light. The applicant was asked to remove it but has explained that the summerhouse has been built to a tight budget. It is 90% complete and has been built with windows acquired from friends and relatives

in order to keep within the budget. In order to remove the window, the applicant would need to pay the builder to almost rebuild the roof completely, including re-felting, and purchase a roof light.

While personal circumstances are not a planning consideration, it is considered that, as the dormer faces over a field rather than a garden and cannot be seen from the road, the inclusion of the dormer is not sufficiently harmful to warrant a refusal of the application on this ground alone.

At 4.2m high, with a green felt roof covering and light timber stain to the boarding, the building is quite large and stark in appearance. However, the building is at the rear of the dwelling and cannot be seen from the Conservation Area to the south. It can only be glimpsed from the A27 to the north due to hedge and tree screening and a drop in ground level between the A27 and the site. It takes up a relatively small area of the garden and does not result in a cramped or overdeveloped appearance. Due to it not being prominent from public viewpoints, it is considered that the character and appearance of the Conservation Area is preserved.

Residential amenity

The dwelling has a rear garden of 53m, with the summerhouse located approximately 45m at the north end of the garden. The back of the summerhouse is situated approximately 0.2m from the boundary fence of 5 Westout Cottages to the east. The summerhouse has windows which face the field to the north and west with the window in the south elevation facing the applicant's rear garden and being obscure glazed. While visible from neighbouring gardens, at the distance involved from the houses it is not considered that it will cause sufficient harm to the residential amenities of those occupiers as to justify refusal.

A condition to limit its use to ancillary residential use only is to be imposed.

Recommendation

APPROVE for the reason:

2PC (amended) Due to its position in the rear garden, away from public views, the summerhouse is considered to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and accords with policy AB4 of the Adur District Local Plan

Subject to:

1. C5E (amended) The summerhouse hereby permitted shall be used solely for purposes incidental to the occupation and enjoyment of 6 Westout Cottages as a dwelling and shall not be used as any form of separate residential accommodation
2. C18Cii (amended) The glazing in the south end elevation of the summerhouse shall ….

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3. C18E3 eastern wall or roofslope of the building

Case Officer Peter Barnett Date 29 October 2010