



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 September 2020

by Graham Wyatt BA (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9 October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/P2114/D/20/3246148

Villa Marguerite, High Street, Seaview, Isle of Wight PO34 5EU

- 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 & Mrs I Pearce-Molland against the decision of Isle of Wight Council.
 - The application Ref 19/01020/HOU, dated 16 September 2019, was refused by notice dated 19 December 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as the "Proposed replacement roof extension & internal alterations".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is whether or not the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Seaview Conservation Area (SCA) and the host property.

Reasons

3. The site lies within the SCA and as such, Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that in making decisions on planning applications and appeals within a Conservation Area, special attention is paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the area. Therefore, in undertaking this duty, I have based my assessment on the evidence presented before me and the observations I made during my site visit.
4. The appeal site lies on the corner of High Street and West Street and is a two storey building constructed of brick that has been painted white on its front and part side elevations. The appeal building is set back from the pavement and has a small area of garden to the front of the property. Nevertheless, the dwelling lies forward of other adjoining properties that form a row of dwellings along High Street. As a result, the appeal building occupies a positive and prominent position within the street scene, especially when viewed looking southwards along High Street, which is an important view identified on the SCA map, with the existing roof extension clearly visible within the public realm.
5. The SCA is quite large and is broken down into three areas within the Seaview Conservation Area Character Assessment 2007 (SCAA) which places the site within the "Historic Core". This area is characterised by narrow streets filled

with tall buildings that give the Historic Core a suburban character that is reflected in the positioning of buildings close to the pavements and roads. I find the close-knit nature of this particular part of the SCA to be a principal characteristic of the area. The majority of properties along the northern part of High Street, including the appeal site, also contain bay windows on their front elevations which creates a pleasing uniformity to the area. I find these elements to be important features that contribute positively to the character and appearance of the SCA, and the significance of the designated heritage asset.

6. The existing roof extension reflects elements of the appeal property and contains three dormer windows on its front elevation that follow the layout of the bay windows on the dwelling. The elevations of the existing structure also slope back slightly, creating a mansard style extension that sits comfortably on the roof of the host building.
7. The appeal proposal seeks to demolish the existing roof extension to provide additional accommodation described as a 'quiet room' and a kitchenette. A glazed screen would be provided around the front and side of the extension with an open terrace on its northern elevation. As a result of its position on the roof, the proposal would be set further into the rear terrace and its front elevation would also be narrower than the existing extension, containing a single window. A flat roof is proposed for the extension which would project over the terrace and would be served by glazed sliding doors.
8. I acknowledge that zinc to cover the extension would dull over time and thus its use would be acceptable. I also accept that there are tall buildings in the vicinity. Nevertheless, although the proposed extension would be of a similar scale to the one it seeks to replace, it would create a rectangular extension with a flat roof and vertical elevations punctuated by full height glazing in its northern elevation. Together with its box shaped appearance, flat roof and the amount of glazing proposed within the extension, it would fail to complement, and would detract from, the character of the appeal property.
9. Whilst I accept that its design is contemporary, the proposal would fundamentally alter the characteristics of the dwelling, appearing as a dominant and discordant addition when viewed from High Street. Given its prominence and visibility within the street scene, it would cause an unacceptable level of harm to the character and appearance, and therefore the significance of, the surrounding SCA and the host property.
10. Given the size of the SCA and that the proposed development would only harm part of the significance of the heritage asset, I find the harm identified to be less than substantial. Accordingly, the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) requires at paragraph 196 that where a development proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.
11. Although the harm is less than substantial it should not be treated as a less than substantial objection to the proposal. Paragraph 193 of the Framework places great weight upon the conservation of designated heritage assets. The appellant suggests that the public benefits of the proposal in this particular case are the improvement, refurbishment and upgrade of the existing property. However, in acknowledging that the maintenance of the existing building would

be a benefit, it would not be a clear public benefit. Therefore, I am not persuaded overall that these matters represent any more than a limited benefit which would be insufficient to outweigh the otherwise identified harm.

12. Thus, the development would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the SCA. It would be in conflict with Policies SP5, DM2 and DM11 of the Isle of Wight Council Core Strategy 2012 which seek, amongst other things, to ensure that developments conserve or enhance the special character of the Island's historic and built environment and complements the character of the surrounding area, particularly in Conservation Areas.

Other Matters

13. The appellant states that as the Council has failed to refer to the SCAA, this can be taken as a tacit agreement that the development would not harm the special features of the SCA identified within the SCAA. However, the Council has identified harm to the SCA that would occur as a result of the development which is not diminished as a result of its non-referral to the SCAA.
14. I note that a representation was made by a local resident raising additional concerns. However, given my findings on the main issue, it is not necessary to consider these matters in detail.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, and having regard to the development plan when read as a whole, the appeal is dismissed.

Graham Wyatt

INSPECTOR