The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 11 March 2021

by C Jack MRTPI MA(TP) MA BSc(Hons)

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23rd March 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/L2250/W/20/3263661
Flat 2, Glen Cairn, Granville Parade, Sandgate CT20 3AL

- 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 Jonathan Heard against the decision of Folkestone and Hythe District Council.
- The application Ref 20/0434/FH, dated 16 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 22 May 2020.
- The development proposed is the formation of a balcony above porch.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the formation of a balcony above porch at Flat 2, Glen Cairn, Granville Parade, Sandgate CT20 3AL in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 20/0434/FH, dated 16 March 2020, subject to the following conditions:

   1) The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this decision.

   2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Site Location Plan and Drawing Number 20/16.

   3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the materials specified in the application.

Preliminary Matter

2. Since making its decision on the application, the Council has adopted its Places and Policies Local Plan 2020, which has superseded the policies of the Shepway District Local Plan Review referenced in the reason for refusal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character or appearance of Glen Cairn and the Sandgate High Street Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. Flat 2 forms part of Glen Cairn a period building situated in a prominent position on Sandgate seafront, adjacent to the public promenade and within the designated Sandgate High Street Conservation Area (the conservation area). Limited information about the conservation area is provided but its significance appears to derive at least in part from the relationship of the settlement with the sea, strongly influenced by the High Street, and how that translates to the historic development of its layout and its architecture.

5. Glen Cairn, which is not listed, retains some external features such as decorative mouldings and dentils on the east elevation where there is also an entrance porch. Various changes over time are evident, notably uPVC windows, although a referenced uPVC conservatory is no longer there. The site forms part of pleasant views along the seafront, in which a mix of ages and styles of buildings can be seen together, some with balconies including of a style and materials similar visually to the balcony proposed. The proposed position of the balcony can also be seen from various other points nearby.

6. The balcony, accessed via a new door in place of a tall window above the porch, would be very modest in scale, set atop the existing flat-roofed porch. Being situated on the eastern side of the building, it would be screened from some views. Whilst clearly visible in various views taken along the seafront particularly from the east, the balcony would be seen principally against the backdrop of Glen Cairn and in the context of the varied built form around it. In many views, the similar but significantly larger glass and steel balconies at the Rowing Club and Villa Pez Espada would be significantly more prominent and eye-catching in the street scene, albeit those buildings and other buildings with balconies are notably different to Glen Cairn. Balconies of various forms can nevertheless be seen from the seafront and form a part of the seaside character and visual appearance of the locality.

7. Being largely glazed, the proposed balcony would be of lightweight appearance and the stainless steel elements would be consistent with the various examples nearby. While the balcony would have a relatively modern appearance, its limited scale, set back position, and the light-weight effect of the materials would ensure it would not confuse, mask, overpower, or inappropriately imitate the more traditional character of the building. Overall, the effect on the character and the appearance of the area would be very limited, and the proposal would not adversely affect the significance of the conservation area.

8. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposed development would not harm the character or appearance of the host building or Sandgate High Street Conservation Area. It would therefore be consistent with adopted Policy HB1 of the Places and Policies Local Plan, which among other things seeks to ensure that proposed development responds positively to its location and surroundings and to the design policies of Village Design Statements. Furthermore, notwithstanding the absence of a heritage asset statement, the proposal would be generally consistent with the conservation area and character area guidance in SDS4 and SDS5 of the Sandgate Village Design Statement 2013, an adopted supplementary planning document.

Conditions

9. In addition to the standard time limit, conditions specifying the approved plans and the materials are necessary in the interests of certainty and the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given, I conclude the appeal should be allowed.

Catherine Jack

INSPECTOR