

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 March 2024

by Martin Andrews MA(Planning) BSc(Econ) DipTP & DipTP(Dist) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 09.04.2024

Appeal Ref: APP/P2114/D/23/3334427

Ellacombe, Circular Road, Seaview PO34 5ET

- 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 T Howe against the decision of the Isle of Wight Council.
 - The application, Ref. 23/01270/HOU, dated 24 July 2023 was refused by notice dated 2 October 2023.
 - The development proposed is alterations to the roof terrace approved under 22/01214/HOU to remove a section of the roof construction and replace it with a glass balustrade.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for alterations to the roof terrace approved under 22/01214/HOU to remove a section of the roof construction and replace it with a glass balustrade at Ellacombe, Circular Road, Seaview in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref. 23/01270/HOU, dated 24 July 2023, and subject to the conditions in the attached Schedule.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed alterations on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the conservation area.

Reasons

3. I saw on my visit that the appeal property is a substantial detached two-storey dwelling on a large cliffside plot within the Seaview Conservation Area. In the approach from the junction with the High Street views of the building are restricted by a high stone wall, but at the point where Circular Road turns sharply northwest the upper part of the front elevation and the roof can be seen the public realm, with possibly additional vantage points at a longer distance.
 4. The appeal scheme seeks to amend the approved scheme under permission reference 22/01214/HOU which includes a third floor of accommodation within the re-built roof with access to a recessed balcony. At the time of my visit and from observation only at the site entrance, the works appear to have progressed some way towards completion of the roof terrace, with the installation of the large glazing panels but the omission of the lower portion of the roof slope.
 5. The Council's arguments have some merit in that the proposed alterations to the already approved terrace would introduce a degree of modernity that would
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not particularly be in keeping with the more traditional character and appearance of the building, for example the marked contrast of the large glazing panels and the glass balustrade with the multi-pane first floor windows. And whilst it is valid for an architectural composition to have composite elements that serve different functions and have contrasting appearances, I do not disagree with the Council's view that the approved recessive balcony design is more respectful of the host dwelling.

6. However, Ellacombe sits well back within a large plot. It is not a designated heritage asset and neither is it locally listed. The actual changes from the approved scheme are in fact relatively minor, with an increase of floor area of little more than 4sqm. The inclusion of a balustrade and the balcony's use by the occupiers are logical in relation to the internal floorspace created and I remain unconvinced that in views of the building there would be any perception that the appearance of the front elevation would be poorer as a result of the absence of the lower section of roof.
7. I also give weight to the overall scheme having improved the building's appearance by the effective removal of the flat roof on the west side, which as current Google imagery (but dated June 2019) shows, completely ruined the character and appearance of the original building. And as regards the impact on those same aspects of the conservation area, it cannot be reasonable to factor in what would have been built if the previous permission had been implemented, only the effect of the actual changes of the amended scheme from its appearance prior to the commencement of refurbishment.
8. As regards that effect, in addition to the roof terrace not being of a size and design that would draw the eye and perceived as harmful, the appellant's evidence confirms my own observations that *'rooftop balconies are a prevalent feature of the village of Seaview'*. From viewing these, including some in the vicinity of the appeal site, I consider that the appeal scheme would be one of the more discreet examples that are designed and built for residents to sit out and enjoy the sea views.
9. On balance, I find that the proposal would not be unacceptably harmful to the character and appearance of Ellacombe. Nor would it be inconsistent with the evolved character and appearance of the Seaview Conservation Area and thereby would not cause harm that would diminish its significance as a designated heritage asset. Accordingly, there would be no material conflict with Policies DM2 & DM11 of the Island Plan Core Strategy 2012 or with Government policy in Section 16: 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment' of Government policy in the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.
10. I shall therefore allow the appeal and impose a condition that the development be carried out in accordance with the approved plans for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

- 1) The development to which this permission relates shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this Decision;
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drawing Nos. 3332-MA-00-3332(P)400; 3332-MA-00-3332(P)401; 3332-MA-02-3332(P)402; 3332-MA-XX-3332(P)403; 3332-MA-02-3332(P)404; 3332-MA-XX-3332(P)405; 3332-MA-XX-3332(P)406; 3332-MA-XX-3332(P)407; 3332-MA-XX-3333(P)408.