
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 February 2026 by S Wilson LL.B. MSc MRTPI

Decision by David M H Rose BA(Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20th March 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/D0840/D/25/3370116

Shearwater Lodge, Parade Hill, Mousehole, Cornwall TR19 6PN

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Ashley Hudson against the decision of Cornwall Council.
 - The application Ref is PA24/02532.
 - The development proposed is for minor alterations and roof alterations to offer additional accommodation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary Matter

3. At the time the decision notice was issued the Penzance Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) was an emerging document and the policies contained therein were afforded weight accordingly. The NDP has since been made and now carries full weight.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the host building and whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Mousehole Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. Whilst there is no specific Conservation Area Appraisal, the Mousehole Historic Settlement Survey (2007) (MHSS) sets out that the Mousehole's architectural significance lies in its unusually intact grouping of vernacular coastal buildings, characterised by early granite and elvan construction, traditional joinery and the retention of features associated with historic fishing and pilchard-processing activities. The dense, fine-grained pattern of narrow lanes, courtyards, and harbour-side structures, many dating from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, forms a coherent and distinctive townscape. Landmark buildings such as Keigwin House, the Ship Inn and the historic harbour reinforce the area's strong sense of architectural continuity and evidential value. Parade Hill follows this pattern and forms a significant entry point to the coastal village.

6. The appeal property is a single storey detached bungalow located to the rear of properties on the north side of Parade Hill. Its construction includes white rendered block work, modern anthracite framed double glazed doors and windows and with natural slate pitched roof slopes. There is a front projecting pitched roof section which forms a covered external area. This element has natural finish timber posts and roof structure. A central section of the building's main roof is flat and is covered with a grey GRP coating.
7. The building is set into the hillside and there are retaining walls to the rear. It is surrounded on three sides by buildings consistent with the CA vernacular and on the fourth by the retaining wall. The surrounding buildings have predominantly traditional simple pitched roofs with gables with some hipped roofs, an aspect which contributes positively to the character and appearance of the area.
8. From the access road to the rear of No. 5 Parkyn Road, I was able to obtain a clear view of the appeal site. From this vantage point, the flat crown roof of the dwelling is readily appreciable, as is the way it sits within the immediate CA context. The appeal building is also publicly visible from the street on Parade Hill.
9. The proposed alteration to the roof form would introduce a contemporary, flat-topped, box-like addition. Visually, it would appear to jut vertically from the centre of the building's roof and its box like form would be wholly uncharacteristic of the host property and the surrounding townscape despite its limited height and volume. This incongruous form would dominate the host roof and sit uncomfortably alongside the prevailing traditional simple pitched and hipped roofs, disrupting their consistent and harmonious appearance. Its visually assertive and discordant geometry would draw the eye away from the attractive roofscape that contributes positively to the character and appearance of the CA, thereby diminishing its aesthetic value and significance. As such, the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, contrary to section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
10. I acknowledge that Silver Seas, located to the southeast, is a three-storey building that has undergone various alterations. While it incorporates some contemporary materials, it nonetheless retains the traditional built form and roof structure characteristic of the prevailing vernacular, and for this reason it is materially distinguishable from the appeal proposal. Similarly, although the appeal building itself includes certain contemporary elements, its modest scale and simple, traditional form currently allow it to sit unobtrusively and subserviently within the CA. I further recognise that the appeal site is set into the hillside and surrounded by other development, affording only limited opportunities for public views. However, publicly accessible glimpses do exist, and the site is also experienced from neighbouring properties within the CA.
11. Given the scale and location of the proposed development, I consider it would lead to a slight erosion of significance and result in minor harm. The harm to the significance of the CA would be less than substantial in terms of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) (the Framework) and would be on the lower end of the scale. Nevertheless, it is a matter of great importance and weight.
12. I am required to balance this harm against the public benefits of the proposal. The provision of improved useability of the appeal site would, primarily, be a personal benefit which I afford little weight. Whilst I acknowledge the intentional separation of

old and new through the use of high-quality contemporary materials and form, I am not convinced the proposal would improve the architectural aesthetic of the host building or the character or appearance of the CA.

13. I recognise that the development would not result in harm to the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, and that existing vehicle and pedestrian access arrangements would remain unchanged. However, these are neutral considerations within the overall planning balance and do not weigh in support of the scheme.
14. The incorporation of thermally efficient construction with improved thermal detailing and environmentally conscious material choices would offer a modest contribution towards sustainable development. Furthermore, there would be economic benefit during construction and the patronage of occupiers for local businesses. Nevertheless, given the limited scale of the proposal, the extent of these benefits would be correspondingly small and attract only minimal weight.
15. The proposal would adversely affect the character and appearance of the host building and consequently fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. The public benefits advanced in support of the appeal are modest and, whether individually or cumulatively, do not outweigh the less than substantial harm identified to the significance of the CA. Great weight must be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets. In this instance, the identified harm is not justified by the limited benefits of the scheme.
16. Accordingly, the proposal would conflict with policies 1, 2 (1)(a), 12 and 24 of the Cornwall Local Plan Strategic Policies 2010-2030, and policies DDH1 paragraph 1 and DDH2 of the NDP, insofar as they seek high quality design that respects the townscape setting, reflects local distinctiveness and preserves or enhances the historic character of heritage assets. Accordingly, I find that the proposal would be in conflict with the development plan when read as a whole. The proposal would also conflict with the relevant paragraphs of the Framework, insofar as they seek high quality development that respects local distinctiveness and conserves or enhances the character or appearance of the historical environment.

Other Matters

17. I acknowledge that the appellant has undertaken on site discussions with the Council. Such an approach is commendable and promoted by the Framework, however any contradiction between the Council's informal views prior to determination, and its final decision, is not a reason to allow the appeal.
18. The proposal is located within the Cornwall National Landscape (CNL) and the CNL Officer was consulted but no reply was received. The lack of response from the CNL Officer does not weigh in favour or against the application. It is a neutral consideration. The Council have considered their duty to seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the CNL, concluding that the scale and impact of the proposal would have a neutral effect on the CNL. I agree.

Conclusion and Recommendation

19. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Wilson

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

20. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

David MH Rose

INSPECTOR