



An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Report ABP 301408-18

Development	Permission for extensions and alterations, including new first floor living area and all associated works to existing house.
Location	Cliff Cottage, Rathdown Lower, Greystones, Co. Wicklow.
Planning Authority	Wicklow County Council.
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	17/985.
Applicant	Peshawar Limited.
Type of Application	Permission.
Planning Authority Decision	Refuse Permission.
Type of Appeal	First Party v. Decision.
Appellants	Peshawar Limited.
Observers	Michael & Orla Scanlon.
Date of Site Inspection	13 th July 2018.
Inspector	Dáire McDevitt.

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1 The appeal site, with a stated area of c 0.030hectares, is located along the Cliff Road in Greystones, Co. Wicklow. The immediate area has a varied character with the design and scale of houses ranging from single to two storey houses, from traditional cottages to infill developments from various periods. The site is located within Greystones Harbour Architectural Conservation Area.
- 1.2 Cliff Cottage is a detached single cottage occupying a corner site at the junction of the Sidmonton Road and Cliff Road. It fronts onto and is accessed off Cliff Road, which continues to Marine Road, where the roadside boundary consists of high wall and solid timber gates. To the south, hoarding forms the boundary with the site of the now demolished Cliff bungalow and the former La Touche Hotel. Demolition works and site clearance has taken place on this adjoining site which is in the process of being redeveloped with the shell of the Hotel retained. The roadside boundary (north) along Sidmonton Road consists of a high wall and the gable of Cliff Cottage. Greystones promenade runs along Cliff Road opposite the site where there is a small cove and beach at the lower level.

2.0 Proposed Development:

The existing single storey cottage has a gfa of c 90 sq.m on a site with a stated area of c.0.030 hectares. A c.160 sq.m contemporary extension is proposed, resulting in a two storey house with an overall gfa of c. 250 sq.m.

The development consists of:

- Removal of pitched roof to cottage.
- First floor extension with an additional mezzanine level.
- Glazing throughout with a terrace and balcony at first floor level.
- Vertical fins to ground floor front projection.

Revised Design (Further Information)

Revised Design Submitted as Further Information consists of:

- The bulk of the extension moved to the southern side and rear of the cottage. Retaining the original form and manner of the cottage.
- The extension is set behind the ridge line, to provide a slim flat overhanging roof and extensive glazing.

The application and Further Information submission included 3D drawings.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1 Decision

Refuse Permission for the following reason:

Having regard to the proposal to retain the existing structure and the design, scale, form, finish and building line of the proposed extensions and alterations, it is considered that the proposed development would dominate and would be out of character with the existing dwelling. In addition, the overall development would not reflect the existing and permitted buildings in the immediate vicinity of the site which are considered to be reflective of the character of Greystones Harbour Architectural Conservation Area and the development would not make a positive contribution to the character

of the ACA. The proposed development would therefore adversely affect the ACA (as designated in the Greystones-Delgany & Kilcoole Local Area Plan 2013-2019) and would seriously injure the visual amenities of the area. The proposed development would, therefore be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3.2 Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1 Planning Report

The application was the subject of a further information request. A modified design was submitted to address the Planning Authority's concerns. Following this submission a recommendation to refuse permission was made on the grounds of visual impact, that the design would be overly dominant and would not be reflective of the character of the area and would, therefore not make a positive contribution to the character of the ACA.

The Area Planner concluded that issues relating to overlooking and overshadowing did not arise.

3.2.2 Other Technical Reports

None.

3.3 Third Party Observations

The current observers made a submission to the Planning Authority. The issues are generally reflective of those raised in the observation to this appeal and shall be covered in more detail in the relevant section of this report.

4.0 Planning History

None pertaining to the application site as per the Council's Planning Register.

In the immediate Vicinity:

Sidmonton Road:

Property adjoining Cliff Cottage to the west (2 semi-detached houses, South Cliff and Sandy Cove):

Planning Authority Reference No. 11/4147 refers to the 2011 grant of permission for alterations and extensions to existing cottage (South Cliff) and the construction of a new house (SandyCove).

Planning Authority Reference No. 04/1352 & 05/3842 refers to refusals of permission for the redevelopment of South Cliff.

St. Columbs:

To the North of SandyCove, along Sidmonton Road

Planning Authority Reference No. 17/858 refers to a 2018 grant of permission for extensions and renovations to include first floor living area with open space area, revised and extended car port.

Planning Authority Reference No. 16/1359 refers to a 2017 grant of permission for 2 no. semi-detached dormer dwellings. Currently under construction on the opposite side of the road to the northwest of Cliff Cottage.

Former La Touche Hotel Site along Cliff Road:

Planning Authority Reference No. 15/114 (An Bord Pleanala Reference No. PL.27.245501) refers to a 2016 grant of permission for a residential scheme of 26 dwellings with the retained shell of the former

La Touche building. Retail units. Carparking and revised access off public road. The site is surrounded by hoarding. Demolition and site clearance works have taken place.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1 Greystones-Delgany and Kilcoole Local Area Plan 2013-2019

Architectural Conservation Areas

HER12: *To preserve the character of Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs), in accordance with Appendix B. The following objectives shall apply to ACAs:*

- *Development will be controlled in order to protect, safeguard and enhance the special character and environmental quality of ACAs*
- *The design of any development in an ACA, including any changes of use of an existing building, shall preserve and/or enhance the character and appearance of the ACA as a whole.*

It should be noted that the designation of an Architectural Conservation Area does not prejudice innovative and contemporary design. The principle of a contemporary and minimalist design style will be encouraged within ACAs, provided it does not detract from the character of the area. It is considered that new buildings should be of their own time in appearance and should not replicate the style and detailing of heritage buildings. The replication of historic architectural styles is considered to be counterproductive to heritage conservation in principle as it blurs the distinction between what is historic and what is contemporary and can lead to the emergence of poorly considered and inauthentic buildings.

Map b Heritage Map Greystones-Delgany and Kilcoole (Church Road ACA).

Prospect:

P1 The prospect seaward from Marine Road, Greystones.

Views:

V3 view seaward from Cliff Road.

V6 view from Cliff Road windgates of Coast Road and Bray Head.

5.2 Wicklow County Development Plan 2016-2022

The policies and objectives are generally reflective of what is included in the Local Area Plan.

Objective HD9 provides that home improvements, alterations and extensions shall be in accordance with the principles of good design and protection of existing residential amenity will normally be permitted. New developments shall have regard to the protection of the residential architectural amenities of houses in the immediate environs, alternative and contemporary designs shall be encouraged (including alternative materials, heights and building form), to provide visual diversity.

Appendix 1. General Development and Design Standards:

House Extensions

- Extensions shall be sensitive to the existing dwelling.
- Shall not provide for new overlooking of the private area of adjacent residences.
- It shall not increase overlooking possibilities.
- Should not overshadow adjacent dwellings.
- While the form, size and appearance of an extension should complement the area, unless the area has an established or unique

or valuable character worthy of preservation, a flexible approach will be taken to the assessment of alternative design concepts.

Prospect:

No. 6 Bray to Greystones Cliff walk.

5.3 Architectural Heritage Protection: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2011)

Chapter 3. Architectural Conservation Areas.

Section 3.10 Criteria for assessment of proposals within Architectural Conservation Areas.

Generally it is preferable to minimise the visual impact of the proposed structure on its setting. The greater the degree of uniformity in the setting the greater the presumption in favour of harmonious design. However, replacement in replica should only be contemplated if necessary, for example, to restore the character of a unified terrace and should be appropriately detailed. Where there is an existing mixture of styles, a high standard of contemporary design that respects the character of the area should be encouraged. The scale of the new structures should be appropriate to the general scale of the area and not is biggest building.

5.4 Natural Heritage Designations

The nearest European sites are:

- Bray Head SAC (site code 000714) is c. 1.2km to the north of the site.
- Glen of the Downs SAC (site code 000719) is c. 3.4km to the west of the site.

- The Murrough Wetlands SAC (site code 002249) is c. 4km to the south of the site.

6.0 The Appeal

6.1 Grounds of Appeal

The first party appeal seeks to address the reason for refusal of permission and can be summarised as follows:

- The objective of the development is to extend and upgrade the existing house to provide a contemporary family home with first floor accommodation which responds to its unique and exceptional location, providing views out to sea.
- The cottage is not a Protected Structure, it was previously part of a pair of semi-detached cottages, the other cottage was demolished to provide 2 no. two storey houses in a pastiche style which, whilst reflecting elements of vernacular buildings in the area, via pitched roofs, etc was not true to the specific style or detailing of the traditional buildings in the area.
- Permission has been granted on the adjoining La Touche site for a large residential development of contemporary style. This will be the predominant structure and style of the block which would dominant over the existing cottage.
- The original design submitted to the Planning Authority involved removing the existing pitched roof of the cottage and providing a contemporary first floor extension with a mezzanine. This was designed in response to the scale of the developments to the south and west of the site.
- Revised proposals were submitted in response to a further information request. This involved moving the majority of the new

extension to the south and rear of the existing cottage, thus preserving the original form and manner of the cottage which addresses the road and footpath and contrasting this with a contemporary structure.

- The applicants note that there are numerous examples worldwide of designs which contrast traditional buildings with a larger contemporary piece of architecture. Through the use of transparency through glass, clean lines and a well-crafted and contrasting structure to compliment the traditional structures.
- Furthermore, the applicants are of the view that the proposal helps scale down the development to the south and tie in with the streetscape. The applicant notes that it would appear that a proposal of similar scale but with a pitched roof would have been more palatable to the Planning Authority.
- The proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on the amenities of adjoining properties. This was reiterated by the Area Planner in their report.
- The concerns raised by the Planning Authority in relation to the building line are noted. The gable of Cliff Cottage forms the roadside boundary along Sidmonton Road. The applicants are of the view that buildings that address the road create a great sense of place and would enhance the streetscape at this point. In addition the existing building line to the west along Sidmonton Road tapers and the building line of the first floor should not be encumbered by this.
- Notwithstanding the applicants have included with the appeal two revised options, for the Boards consideration, which address the issue of the setback along Sidmonton Road:
 - Option 1 has set back the first floor.

- Option 2 has set back the first floor and revised the roof profile to square off with an open roof detail.
- The Planning Authority's concerns relating to architectural treatment could be addressed by condition.
- The applicant have set out a number of issues raised in the Planners Report which they would like addressed, ranging from the acceptability of the demolition of the cottage to the acceptability of a contemporary design at this location.

The appeal documentation included:

- 3D drawings of proposed development
- Samples of projects carried out by the Architect.
- Details of permitted development to the south.
- Details of houses constructed to the west.

6.2 Planning Authority Response

None.

6.3 Observations

An observation has been received from Michael & Orla Scanlon, SouthCliff, Sidmonton Road, Greystones, Co. Wicklow (adjoining property to the west). This can be summarised as follows:

- The extension and alterations proposed are neither sensitive to the existing dwelling or to their property (South Cliff) which is attached to Cliff Cottage.
- The scale, design and mass of the structure is not appropriate to the site.

- The changes submitted as part of the further information do not alleviate the negative impact the proposed development would have on South Cliff.
- The proposal would not enhance or preserve the character of either properties.

6.4 Prescribed Bodies

The appeal was referred to Failte Ireland and An Chomhairle Ealaíon. No response received.

7.0 Assessment

The main issues in this appeal are those raised in the grounds of appeal and I am satisfied that no other substantive issues arise. The issue of appropriate assessment also needs to be addressed.

The applicants have set out two alternative proposals to the original design in the report that accompanied the appeal. I am satisfied that the scope of the changes suggested would not require re-advertisement. The issues can be dealt with under the following headings. This report deals with the application lodged with the Planning Authority with reference to the modifications lodged with the appeal.

- Design.
- Appropriate Assessment.

7.1 Design

7.1.1 HER 12 sets out the Council's objectives in relation to developments within Architectural Conservation Area (ACAs) identified in the Local Area Plan. The objective outlines that the designation of an area as an

Architectural Conservation Area does not preclude a modern approach to design as this clearly differentiates the historical buildings from the newer. This approach is favoured over the replication of historical architectural styles which can contribute to the emergence of poorly considered and inauthentic buildings.

- 7.1.2 Permission is being sought for a modern extension to Cliff Cottage. It is not recorded as a Protected Structure or included in the NIAH Architectural Inventory of Ireland. The cottage is prominent along the Cliff Road which is within the Greystones Harbour Architectural Conservation Area and any design, therefore, should respect the character of this area while also facilitating more contemporary architectural approaches to design.
- 7.1.3 Cliff Road and Sidmonton Road is an area in transition which is undergoing extensive redevelopment. Immediately to the south on the site of the former Cliff bungalow and La Touche Hotel permission was granted in 2016 for a contemporary style development. This includes residential units bounding Cliff Cottage. The redevelopment of sites and infill developments along Sidmonton Road to the north of Cliff Cottage in contrast, is characterised by a variety of designs and scales with the most recent interventions favouring a more traditional approach to design. 3D drawings have been submitted with the application and the appeal for all design options proposed for the extension to Cliff Cottage, showing the relationship of the proposals with some of the existing built environment.
- 7.1.4 The applicants have opted for a design that clearly differentiates the new works from existing cottage on site. Having examined the plans and inspected the area I agree with the applicant's approach. There is a clear

distinction between the old and the new. The effect is not to jar with the character of the existing built environment but to add a contemporary element that enhances the architectural grain of the area. This approach is generally favoured by the Architectural Heritage Guidelines for developments within Architectural Conservation Areas, especially where there is an existing mixture of styles.

- 7.1.5 The use of a glazing is common design practice when extending older structures in a sensitive manner. They assist in integrating the old and the new, while at the same time clearly distinguishing different architectural styles or periods. In this instance the use of glazing to the first floor and vertical fins to the front section of the ground floor clearly offers a contrast between the two architectural styles while at the same time complementing the simple design and form of the original cottage. The modified design submitted to the Planning Authority in response to a further information request, in my view address, the concerns raised by the Planning Authority in relation to scale and dominance of the original design.
- 7.1.6 I am satisfied that the proposed development in terms of design, scale and mass would not detract from the architectural composition of the Architectural Conservation Area and would not form a discordant feature on the streetscape. Furthermore, the scale and mass of the proposal is not considered overbearing and would not have a significant negative impact on the character of the existing cottage on site or on the Greystones Harbour Architectural Conservation Area.
- 7.1.7 In my view, the use of high quality materials and finishes and a contemporary design offers an opportunity for an aesthetically pleasing development at this location. The quality of the materials and finishes are

intrinsic to the delivery the proposed design at this prominent coastal location. Notwithstanding that the application lacks detailed information in relation to finishes and materials. I am satisfied that this matter could be dealt with by condition if the Board consider granting permission.

7.1.8 I recognise that the proposal would have a visual impact along Cliff Road and Sidmonton Road, indeed any new development would have a visual impact. However, in my opinion, this would be a positive one. The proposal would enhance the architectural grain of the area and facilitate a contemporary design which would be a welcomed addition at this location within the Greystones Harbour Architectural Conservation Area.

7.1.9 I consider that the development would be appropriate in the context of current Development Plan policy and standards, including the relationship of the proposed building to the public realm and adjoining properties. The proposed development would not detract from the residential amenities of adjoining properties. Overlooking and overshadowing of adjoining properties are not considered material having regard to the orientation and relationship of the properties.

7.1.10 The two modified options proposed by the applicants at appeal stage, consisting of setbacks to the first floor and revision to the roof, are an attempt to address the Planning Authority's concerns relating to the impact of the proposed development on the amenities of adjoining sites and the visual impact along Sidmonston Road. I have examined the revised proposal and I am of the view that the modifications are not required and I consider the proposal submitted to the Planning Authority under Further Information acceptable.

7.1.11 The changing character of Cliff Road and Sidmonton Road can, in my opinion, assimilate different design approaches without having a detrimental impact on the overall character of the area. Given the coastal location and the existing pattern of development in the vicinity, I am of the opinion that the design of the extension lodged under Further Information to the Planning Authority on the 19th of February 2018 represents a well considered design approach that reasonably addresses the sensitives of the Greystones Harbour Architectural Conservation Area. The development would not be out of character with the existing pattern of development in the area. The proposed development, in my view, would not be injurious to the character of the Greystones Harbour Architectural Conservation Area or contrary to objective HER12.

7.1.12 I, therefore, consider that the appeal should be upheld and permission should be granted subject to modified conditions.

7.2 Appropriate Assessment

7.2.1 Having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development and the location of the site in a fully serviced urban area, no Appropriate Assessment issues arise and it is not considered that the proposed development would be likely to have a significant effect individually or in combination with other plans or projects on a European site.

8.0 Recommendation

I recommend that planning permission should be granted, subject to conditions, as set out below.

9.0 Reasons and Considerations

Having regard to the nature, extent and design of the proposed development, to the general character and pattern of development in the area and to the provisions of the Greystones – Delgany and Kilcoole Local Area Plan 2013-2019 it is considered that, subject to compliance with conditions set out below, the proposed development would not seriously injure the amenities of properties in the vicinity and would not detract from the character of Greystones Harbour Architectural Conservation Area. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

10.0 Conditions

1. The development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application on the 14th day of August, 2017 and with the further plans and particulars received by the Planning Authority on the 19th day of February, 2018, except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with the following conditions. Where such conditions require details to be agreed with the planning authority, the developer shall agree such details in writing with the planning authority prior to commencement of development and the development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the agreed particulars.

Reason: In the interest of clarity.

2. Details including samples of the materials, colours and textures of all the external finishes to the proposed development shall be submitted to,

and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development.

Reason: In the interest of protecting the character of Greystones Harbour Architectural Conservation Area.

3. The existing dwelling and proposed extension shall be jointly occupied as a single residential unit and the extension shall not be sold, let or otherwise transferred or conveyed, save as part of the dwelling.

Reason: To restrict the use of the extension in the interest of residential amenity.

4. Notwithstanding the exempted development provisions of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, and any statutory provision replacing or amending them, no development falling within Class 1 or Class 3 of Schedule 2, Part 1 of those Regulations shall take place within the curtilage of the house, without a prior grant of planning permission.

Reason: In the interest of the amenities of the area.

5. Site development and building works shall be carried out only between the hours of 0800 to 1900 Mondays to Fridays inclusive, between 0800 to 1400 hours on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays and public holidays. Deviation from these times will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances where prior written approval has been received from the planning authority.

Reason: In order to safeguard the amenities of property in the vicinity.

6. Water supply and drainage arrangements, including the disposal of surface water, shall comply with the requirements of the planning authority for such works and services.

Reason: In the interest of public health.

7. The developer shall pay to the planning authority a financial contribution in respect of public infrastructure and facilities benefiting development in the area of the planning authority that is provided or intended to be provided by or on behalf of the authority in accordance with the terms of the Development Contribution Scheme made under section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. The contribution shall be paid prior to commencement of development or in such phased payments as the planning authority may facilitate and shall be subject to any applicable indexation provisions of the Scheme at the time of payment. Details of the application of the terms of the Scheme shall be agreed between the planning authority and the developer or, in default of such agreement, the matter shall be referred to An Bord Pleanála to determine the proper application of the terms of the Scheme.

Reason: It is a requirement of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, that a condition requiring a contribution in accordance with the Development Contribution Scheme made under section 48 of the Act be applied to the permission.

Dáire McDevitt

Planning Inspector

25th July 2018