

App.No: 160128	Decision Due Date: 8 April 2016	Ward: Meads
Officer: Neil Holdsworth	Site visit date: 4 April 2016	Type: Planning Permission
Site Notice(s) Expiry date: 9 March 2016		
Neighbour Con Expiry: 9 March 2016		
Press Notice(s): 16 February 2016		
Over 8/13 week reason: To meet committee cycle		
Location: Wish Tower Mess Room And Yard, King Edwards Parade, Eastbourne		
Proposal: Installation of new war memorial at the wish tower, with associated hard landscaping.		
Applicant: Mr John Boyle		
Recommendation: Approve conditionally		

Executive Summary: This application seeks planning permission to install a **civilian memorial** wall within the moat of the Eastbourne Wish Tower and associated landscaping works, containing an inscription setting out a list of civilian deaths within the town during the second world war. It is considered that the proposed memorial is well designed and fits in well with its setting, and overall the works would preserve and enhance the setting of this important historic asset.

Planning Status: The wish tower is a Grade 2 listed building and a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

Relevant Planning Policies:

National Planning Policy Framework 2012

12. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Core Strategy Local Plan 2013 Policies

D10: Historic Environment

Eastbourne Borough Plan Saved Policies 2007

UHT 1: Design

UHT 7: Landscaping

UHT 9: Protection of Historic parks and gardens

UHT 15: Protection of Conservation Areas

UHT 17: Protection of Listed buildings and their settings.

Site Description:

The Wish tower and its grounds are an important landscape feature on the Eastbourne seafront, located to the west of the town centre. It is set in an area of landscaped public space comprising the western lawns to the west and the wish tower slopes to the east, and is also accessible from the south downs way that forms part of the seafront promenade, and King Edwards Parade. The original tower is partially surrounded by a moat wall which was partially demolished in the 1960's.

Relevant Planning History:

120357

Demolition of life expired cafe and sun lounge building including cantilevered concrete balcony, retention of existing hoardings, provision of new hoarding to seaward side of site

Planning Permission

Approved conditionally

05/04/2012

120382

Construction of temporary cafe structure with catering facility and seating for around 50 - 60 covers located within proposed building and also on external deck and patio area

Planning Permission

Approved conditionally

13/07/2012 -

130527

Display of an internally illuminated sign on the front elevation of the Western View Cafe (Site of Former Wish Tower restaurant).

Advertisement

Advert Approved: 01/10/2013

Proposed development:

This application seeks to construct a war memorial within the ground of the Martello Tower (otherwise known as the wish tower).

The memorial wall is 7.6m in length and 2.6m in height. The memorial is to be an arc to reflect the geometry of the Wish Tower itself and its moat.

The materials will be controlled via planning condition but at this stage will be constructed from light coloured granite with the spiral inset being on a contrasting colour with a glazed centre.

The hard and soft landscaping will be controlled via planning condition but at this stage it is envisaged that there would be hard landscaping finishes to reflect that used in the memorial and that seating would be provided so that people can fully experience this tranquil area created by the new memorial.

Consultations:

Internal:

Specialist Advisor (Conservation)

'The simple arched design, compliments the geometry of the mound and tower in addition, to providing an opportunity to reconstruct part of the moat wall, which was removed to accommodate the 1960's café. Additionally, the design of the hard landscaping which includes; a seating area for contemplation and relaxation, further enhances the communal/spiritual value attached to the heritage asset.

Furthermore the pallette of materials as proposals would go towards enhancing the aesthetic merit attached to the memorial and in turn the significance associated with the Wish Tower and its setting.

In summary the siting, scale, design and use of materials proposed for the memorial will go towards enhancing the heritage asset, its immediate and wider setting."

Conservation Area Advisory Group:

The application was considered at the Conservation Area Advisory Committee on Tuesday 29th March 2016. The Group raised no objections and were fully supportive of the scheme.

External:

County Archaeologist: The County Archaeologist recommends conditions requiring a programme of archaeological works to be undertaken, and subsequent details of the foundation design to ensure the remains of the original wall (demolished in 1960 in the construction process of the café) are not altered by the development.

Historic England: No response received

The Eastbourne Civilian Memorial Trust have written on 21st February to confirm that that they, and not the Eastbourne Society, have made the application in question.

Neighbour Representations:

Objections have been received and cover the following points:

One letter of objection has been received expressing concern about the amount of memorials and objects of art within the town, and drawing attention to the existing condition of the wish tower itself.

Appraisal:

This application seeks to construct a war memorial within the ground of the Martello Tower (otherwise known as the Wish Tower). The Tower is part of a series of coastal defence towers located between Folkestone and Seaford constructed during the Napoleonic Wars, completed in 1808. In addition to its defensive function, it has historically been used by the coastguard and a museum of geology. It is currently not used, and functions primarily as a landscape feature and a major landmark on the Eastbourne seafront. It is Grade 2 listed and a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

The tower itself is surrounded by a circular moat wall. Historically this encircled the entire tower, however a portion of it was removed to facilitate the construction of the wish tower restaurant and observation place that was constructed on the site in 1960. The proposed development effectively reinstates the curved form of this wall albeit built with modern materials, leaving a gap for pedestrian access, and containing a decorative memorial feature.

The proposed memorial contains an inscription listing out the names of the 174 local residents within Eastbourne who were killed during the WW2 bombing raids. A gazed panel is inscribed with a quote from Sir

Winston Churchill. A hard landscaped area is placed on the inside of the monument reflecting the spiral inset within the wall and incorporating a low level offset spiral, with a seating area, for contemplation and relaxation.

The main issue involved in assessing this application are the impact of the proposed development on the Martello Tower, which is a grade 2 listed building and scheduled ancient monument. The memorial wall is considered to be a sensitive contemporary reinterpretation of the original historic original wall which will preserve and enhance the setting of the Martello tower, and creating a further destination of interest on the seafront. In conservation and design terms the proposal is considered acceptable.

The applicant has already obtained Scheduled Ancient Monument consent from Historic England for the proposed works. Whilst Historic England have not responded to the consultation, the grant of SAM consent indicates that they are likely to be supportive of the proposal. In terms of archaeology, the main issue is the impact of the works on the original foundations of the moat wall (demolished above ground in 1960 which is understood to remain two metres below ground).

At the request of the County Archaeologist and reflecting the negotiation of the Scheduled Monument Consent approval, a condition has been applied requiring detailed drawings of the foundation structure prior to the commencement of works to ensure it does not interfere with the protected archaeology. This is alongside a condition requiring a programme of ongoing archaeological investigation to be undertaken throughout the course of building works.

One objection has been raised questioning the need for further memorials within Eastbourne. In response to this it is considered that – in the absence of any specific policy- the amount of existing war memorials within the town is not a relevant consideration in respect of this decision. The assessment that must take place in the consideration of this application is the impact of the works on the Martello Tower and surrounding conservation area.

Subject to the conditions set out below, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in conservation and design terms, and in terms of its impact on the setting of the Grade 2 listed building and the wider town centre and seafront conservation area.

Human Rights Implications:

The impacts of the proposal have been assessed as part of the application process. Consultation with the community has been undertaken and the impact on local people is set out above. The human rights considerations have been taken into account fully in balancing the planning issues; and furthermore the proposals will not result in any breach of the Equalities Act 2010.

Conclusion: The proposal is considered acceptable in design and conservation terms.

Recommendation: Grant permission

Conditions:

1. Development in accordance with the approved plans
2. Development within 3 years.
3. Submission of a programme of Archaeological works prior to with details of any findings submitted within 3 months of completion
4. Details of foundations, piling configurations, drainage and service to include detailed design and method statement showing preservation of surviving archaeological remains prior to commencement of development.
5. Provision of a methodology statement detailing any necessary works of repair and reinstatement to the moat wall.
6. Samples of materials to be used in construction of the monument.

Informatives:

1. This approval does not specifically permit the illumination of the memorial in question. The method of illumination requires careful consideration as it has the potential to have a significant impact on views of this building of historic importance.

Appeal:

Should the applicant appeal the decision the appropriate course of action to be followed, taking into account the criteria set by the Planning Inspectorate, is considered to be **written representations**.