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Planning & Heritage Statement – Bluebell House, Ventnor, PO38 1DS

INTRODUCTION

This statement supports a Planning Application at 74-76 Mitchell Road, Bluebell House, Ventnor, PO38 1DS.



Figure 1: Photograph of Front of Bluebell House. Produced by Applecore PDM.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

- National Planning Policy Framework

- Local Plan
 - SP1 - Spatial Strategy
 - SP2 - Housing
 - SP3 - Economy
 - SP5 - Environment
 - SP7 - Travel
 - DM7- Social and Community Infrastructure
 - DM8 - Economic Development
 - DM22 - Developer Contributions

LOCATION

The property lies within the Ventnor settlement boundary conservation area. This property lies within a part of town that is set on the lower levels of the downs and forms a visual backdrop to the town centre.

The site is within easy walking distance of the town centre of Ventnor. Accordingly, the site benefits from the frequent Island bus service with the nearest bus stops situated at the junction with Macrocarpa Road (Mitchell Avenue) 109m & 122m away respectively or Grove Road (Spring Hill) 157m or 189m away. Currently the site benefits from 5 off-road parking spaces, the building is comprised of a pair of Victorian semi-detached villas of 4 storeys in height, with a basement and attic. The building has had numerous alterations and extensions in the past, with its most recent being a large single storey rear extension. There remain very limited period features within the building. Room sizes have been modified in some instances to provide for bathroom facilities and additional bedspace capacity

The site measures approximately 1206m² in size and has a topography sloping down towards the north.



Figure 2: Ariel Capture with Boundary. (Google Maps, 2024)

Mitchell Road is an established residential community, comprising of large detached and semi-detached properties, each on their own sizeable plot of land. Many of these properties have been subdivided over the years due to the proportions of the buildings. 74-76 Mitchell Road is thought to be converted to one dwelling approximately 40 years ago and used as a residential care home in excess of 10 years.

The site falls outside of any flood risk areas.

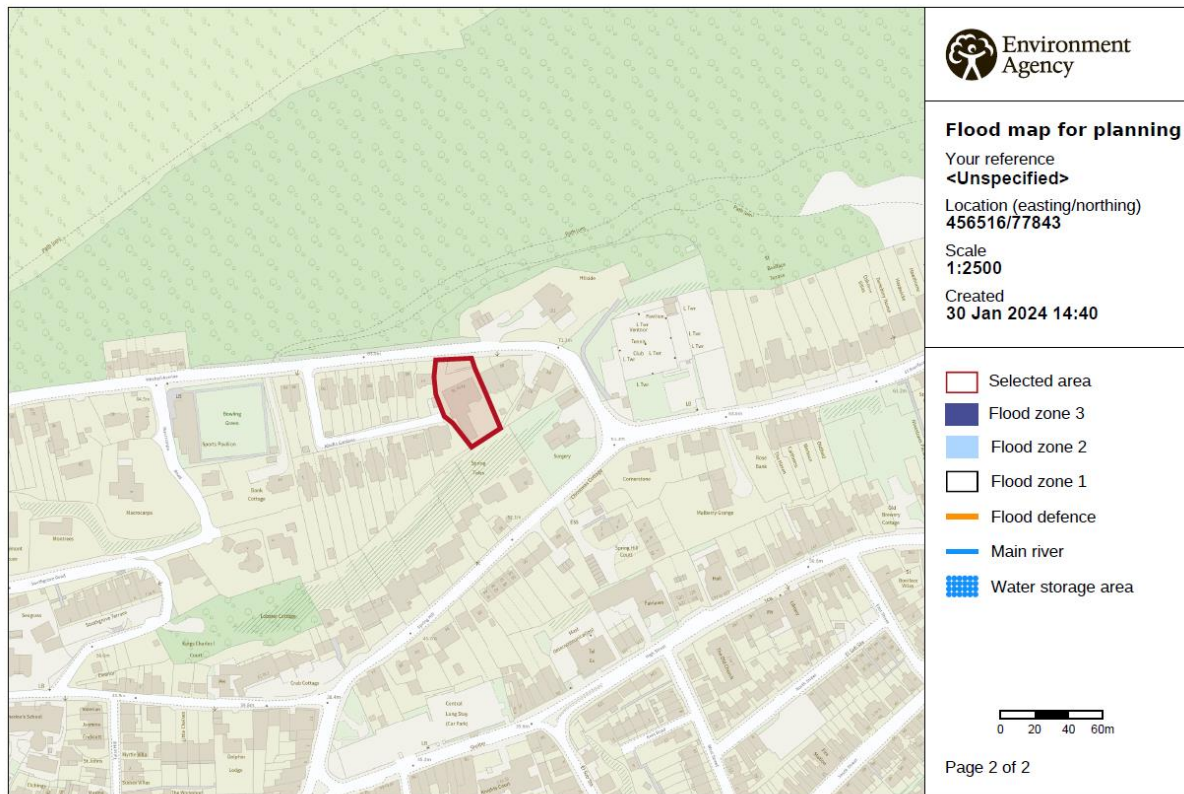


Figure 3: Flood Risk Map for 74-76 Mitchell Avenue, Ventnor. (Environment Agency, 2024)

PROPOSAL

The proposal is for the conversion of an empty dwelling, previously used as a care home to a 22-bedroom house in multiple occupation.

Aims of the proposed:

- 22 Single Occupancy Rooms (16 with own WC)
- 6 Bathrooms
- 1 Shower Room
- 2 separate WC
- Adequate Bin Storage
- Adequate Bike Storage for 22 Cycles
- 3 Kitchen Dining Areas (60.99m²)
- 3 Lounge areas (54.16m²)

CONTEXT

The current care home is no longer fit for purpose and was closed in April 2023 for multiple reasons which are covered in the justification statement submitted with the application. The proposed use will repurpose a large empty property providing good quality accommodation for those in need of homes.

The previous care home provided bedrooms for residents over the ground and first floors with 2 x 2 bedrooms flats within the roof, used for owners and managers accommodation. There is no increase to the number of bedrooms and therefore any impact on local amenity will not be above that of the existing use.

The existing property is constructed using brick and render finish, with white UPVC windows, white rainwater goods and grey tiled roof. A large single-story extension has been constructed in later years, at the rear of the property to provide additional bedrooms. The main dwelling is set back from the road and has an elevated position above the road.

The rear garden currently stands at approximately 22.5 metres deep from the back wall of the main dwelling and has a width of 14.2 metres, providing a large outdoor space, even taking into account the proposed cycle storage arrangements. The boundary of the property is surrounded by wood fences that will provide privacy to the residents and the neighbouring properties.

DESIGN & MATERIALS

The external changes proposed are minor. The new window and door will be white UPVC to match existing.

The minor changes to the property are thought to restore the fenestration to reflect what would have been the arrangement in the existing property, as built. Both 74 and 76 Mitchell Road will mirror each other on the front elevations.



Figure 4: Existing Elevation. Produced by Applecore PDM.



Figure 5: Proposed Elevations. Produced by Applecore PDM.

ACCESS

The proposed access to the front of the property is to remain the same.

The public highway will remain untouched and the pavement will remain. The allocation for parking remains the same and the changes proposed are not deemed to be of detriment.

The use of a care home would have a higher demand for parking due to visitors, staff and medical professionals visiting the property. The proposed use would have a lesser demand for parking than that of the existing use.

ECOLOGY

No protected species will be affected by these proposals. There are no significant trees on the site. The proposed works to the building are minor and will cause no harm to any existing trees or vegetation.

HERITAGE

As stated above, the property lies within a conservation area. As per the below map, the site falls under conservation area 4; Ventnor. This conservation area was designated on 10 June 1994 and re-evaluated and amended on 2nd November 1998 before again being re-evaluated and amended 13th April 2006. The conservation was separated into 4 categories.

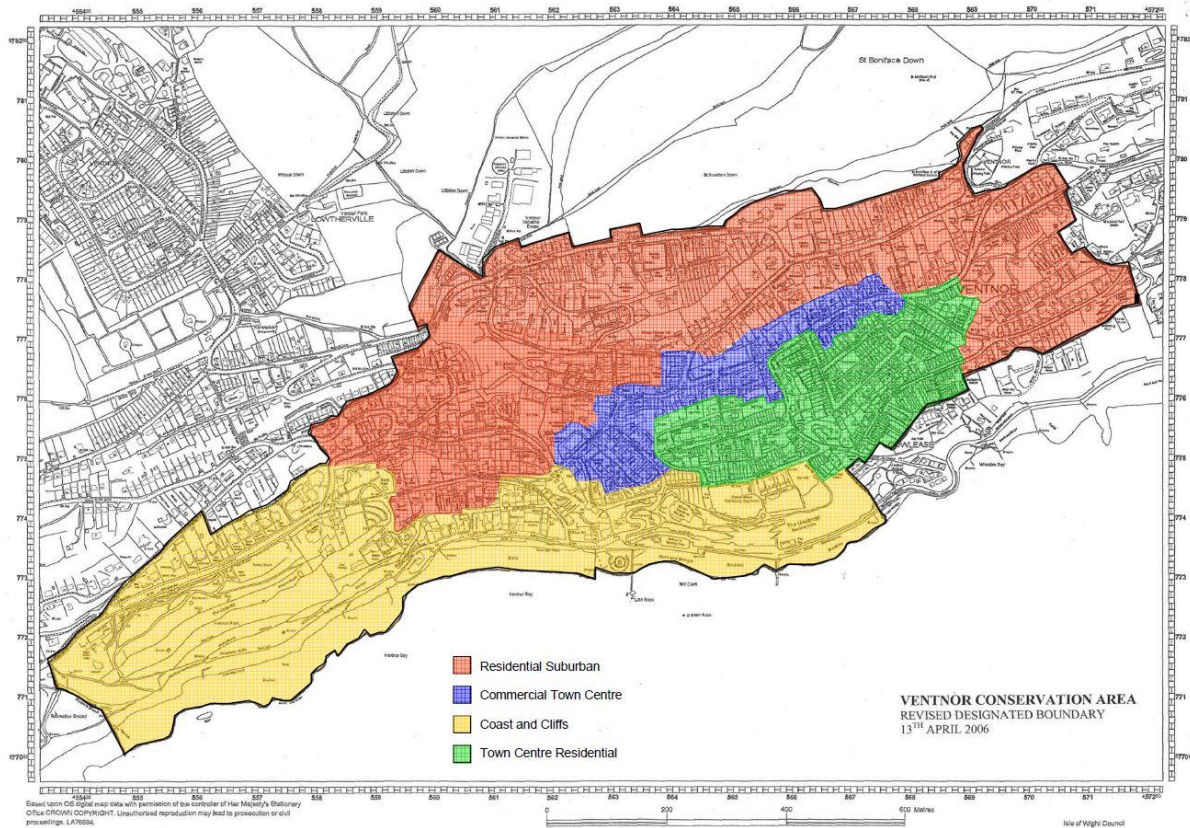


Figure 4: Ventnor Conservation Area Map. (Conservation and Design Section, Planning Department, 2006)

The character reason for this designation is **“substantial distinctive properties within large gardens which are set within and against the landscape of the downs and form a backdrop to the lower levels of the town.”** (Conservation and Design Section, Planning Department, unknown). This area was built alongside the main town centre but shows substantial development between 1850 and 1890. Changes to the area since 1890 have been minimal (Conservation and Design Section, Planning Department, unknown).

Victorian elements such as projecting bay windows, roof gables, porches, lean too’s and ancillary structures are characteristic features important to this area. Also, an important part of this area is the varied roof pitches, turrets and dominant chimneys. This proposal does not aim to in any way alter any bay windows, roofs gables etc (Conservation and Design Section, Planning Department, unknown).

As per the ‘Ventnor Conservation Area Characteristics Statement’, this area is quiet with the exception of through traffic. This area can benefit from birdsong and the smells of gardens dependant on season (Conservation and Design Section, Planning Department, unknown).

Identified positive elements of this area are:

- Consistency of period and overall character.
- Relationship between buildings, trees and topography.
- Quality of individual buildings and details.
- Winding roads with stone walls and evolving views with element of surprise.
- Survival of traditional street furniture.

(Conservation and Design Section, Planning Department, unknown)

Identified negative elements of this area are:

- Poor condition and loss of original details on some buildings
- Installation of unsympathetic replacement doors and windows.
- Poor condition and closure of steps and paths.

(Conservation and Design Section, Planning Department, unknown)

Identified potential; enhancement of the area include:

- Encourage repair and reinstatement of traditional details.
- Repair and reinstate foot paths and steps.
- Improve paving materials based on historic precedent.
- Consider introduction of Article 4(2) Direction to improve control over alterations to buildings and boundary walls.

(Conservation and Design Section, Planning Department, unknown)

In response to identified negative elements, this proposal does not aim to remove any original details of the property. The proposed new window aims to be a more sympathetic alternative to the existing doors and windows.

There is nothing within the building of historical significance to be retained. For example, there is no evidence of architraves, covings etc.

No changes are proposed to be made to the external materials. Proposed new external elements are proposed to match existing as closely as possible.

Policy number SP5 and DM11 restrict development within this site.

The only change to the exterior face of the property is the removal of a door with sidelights on the right-hand side of the front face, to be replaced with a window reflective of the left-hand side. This provides symmetry to the front of the property that aesthetically improves the look of the property and will be more in keeping and sympathetic to the visual of the property as a whole.

CONCLUSION

The proposed amendments comply with planning policy, it has also been designed to fully comply and exceed the standards required from Isle of Wight Housing and Community Services.

This proposal is not considered to cause any detriment to the surrounding areas.

The proposed materials are not considered to cause any detriment to the surrounding area.

The proposed works will not cause any harm to the surrounding area and is not contrary to policy. Therefore, the application is thought to be acceptable.

REFERENCES

Conservation and Design Section, Planning Department, 2006. *Ventnor Conservation Area Character Map*, Isle of Wight: Isle of Wight Council.

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[Accessed 10 January 2024].