

Application Number

P/2012/0579

Site Address

Princess Promenade
Torquay
Devon

Case Officer

Mrs Ruth Robinson

Ward

Tormohun

Description

Replacement of lower deck and the Banjo, in filling of void areas between deck and Banjo wall; extension of steps

Executive Summary/Key Outcomes

This application involves the removal of both decks of the Banjo and the replacement of the lower deck to provide an extended viewing platform.

Recommendation

Approval; subject to the further views of English Heritage in respect of the requested further justification for the associated demolition.

Site Details

The Banjo comprises a 2 storey concrete viewing platform which was constructed in the 1960s as an extension to Princess Gardens. Princess Gardens is a Grade II entry on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. Although the Banjo is not included within the curtilage of the protected garden it is an important part of its overall character and use for promenading. The site lies within the Torquay Harbour Conservation Area.

Detailed Proposals

It is proposed to remove both of the decks of the Banjo leaving the concrete supports in place. The lower deck will then be replaced with a similar structure except that it will include infilling the existing voids between the deck and the rear wall of the banjo. The existing steps will be widened from the eastern and western promenades. The replacement deck will be surfaced in an imprinted design to 'harmonise' in colour and pattern with the granite slabs recently laid on the eastern prom. The existing railings will be reinstalled and the residual parapet wall to the rear of the Banjo will be finished at 1.1m in height and include

a railing detail.

A cathodic protection system is to be installed to the original reinforced concrete supporting structures.

Summary Of Consultation Responses

English Heritage: Has commented that they need a more detailed understanding of the rationale for and benefit of these works through a Heritage Impact Assessment. These comments are attached as N.....

Summary Of Representations

None.

Relevant Planning History

None.

Key Issues/Material Considerations

The structure was constructed in the 1960s as an extension to Princess Gardens and was designed to provide a public viewing platform. It has been in a poor structural condition for several years and public access was denied until recent works were completed to reinforce the support to the promenade.

The key issue is the acceptability of the proposal from an historical / architectural perspective in terms of the evolution of Princess Gardens and it is this point that EH have requested be addressed through a Heritage Impact Assessment. This should explain the significance of the structure in terms of the evolution of the gardens, evaluate the reasons for the works and the advantages or otherwise of replicating it in the manner proposed. This assessment has been requested and is being carried out. Progress on this will be reported verbally.

The Councils archaeologist has been involved in the evolution of the proposal and is satisfied that the removal of the structure is justified due to its physical condition and the replacement of the lower deck only is appropriate in terms of the character of the gardens. The opening up of views from the gardens will be more in keeping with the original layout.

The infilling of the void to the rear of the retaining wall creates a larger platform for public use and allows the access steps to be widened which helps create a more inviting space.

Conclusions

It is considered that the works are acceptable. However the concerns of English

Heritage need to be considered and where appropriate included in the approach to the scheme.

Recommendation:

Approve; subject to the views of English Heritage and the following conditions:

1. Samples of surfacing materials for platform and steps.
2. Detail of railing to rear retaining wall.

Relevant Policies

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