

The Whim 36 Park Road HYTHE

Listed Building
Grade:II

"The Whim" is a circular, one-storey house constructed between 1874 and 1878, designed in this unusual form by the owner and constructed by a local builder. The curved walls of this timber-framed building are clad in grooved weather-boarding, it has a slate roof with wooden fretted and pointed fascia boards acting as a cornice and a central circular glazed atrium. A substantially intact purpose-built circular bungalow retaining its plan form of internal corridor with central glazed atrium and segmental rooms, a possibly unique shape and plan form for a purpose-built residence, and a very early example of a bungalow



From: the "Hythe & Sandgate Advertiser", February 26th. 1886.

The Whim" at Hythe:

..... Our attention was arrested whilst walking in Park Road, Hythe, by the sight of a curious-looking above the gateway of which were the words "The Whim". Was it a gasometer? No! for the numerous windows Letting in the light, and there were several chimneys which let out smoke, and the strange title of the structure, "The Whim" was rendered more inexplicable when we observed from an elevation that the centre of the building had no roof, appearing like a well, and we surmised perhaps it is used for the storage of water or of some fluid.

Bursting with curiosity, "a weakness inseparable from frail human nature) we knock on the gateway on the north side of this peculiar construction, which is opened by an elderly gentleman, who, in answer to our enquiries, courteously informs us that it is his residence, that it was built according to his own design, and that he so named it because it was the fruit of his "whimsical" fancy, and he kindly asked us to inspect the same.

"This is my own design entirely" says Mr. Scott, the owner, as we enter by the back way. I wanted a house in which all the rooms could be on one floor, and I saw many designs, none of which touched my fancy. At last, one day I took some paper, drew a circle on it, and with the use of a pair of compasses produced the result which you shall see. At first I couldn't get a builder to undertake the erection of my "Whim", as they looked upon it as too much fantastical to come within their comprehension, but eventually, Mr. Evenden of Hythe tackled the job, and singular to relate, his estimate of the cost came to within a few pounds of my own.

"We pass through a passage which contains a ladder, and then we are within the inner circle of this extraordinary residence, and over which, is a lamp, lighted at night and enclosed in glass; inside is a pretty fernery. There is no roof to this interior, and as the owner naively remarks "you see, we get those great requisites to health, plenty of light and air", - and there is no disputing the fact. Around and between this inner and outer circle is a corridor, which makes a nice smoking, as well as a picture gallery, for on the walls are hung several pictures, showing that Mr. Scott has somewhat of a taste for art, and in walking round it is almost like being out of doors. The outer, roofed in circle contains the living compartments, and this part of the structure might be described as a huge cake, the rooms being cut into slices and sections. We commence with the kitchen, from there we enter the sitting room, then the drawing room, on to the bedrooms, and out from whence we entered. As the door of one room leads into another, we can take couple of uninterrupted runs round the house - in the outer, covered circle, and also in the inner, uncovered circle. The rooms, although small, are very comfortable. The pitch being eleven feet six inches and are very tastefully and comfortably furnished. However, that is a personal matter to which no further allusion need be made. Of course, the numerous windows on the outside, which first attracted our attention to this eccentricity, are now explained, and besides this, there is plenty of glass in the doors of all the rooms, and coloured glass of a pretty design in the second entrance to the house on the east side. Mr. Scott is particular in calling your attention to the use of the earth closets, which he believes to be the most healthy things in existence. Attention was also called to the American stoves used in every room in this house, which stand out some distance from the wall, and as Mr. Scott contends, retain the heat in the room, which otherwise would escape up the chimney.

There is a good view of the sea from some of the rooms, We are moreover informed that there is a rainwater butt in connection with the residence which will hold a great quantity of water, also a stable, a coach house, and spare land for a garden, complete this bijou residence.

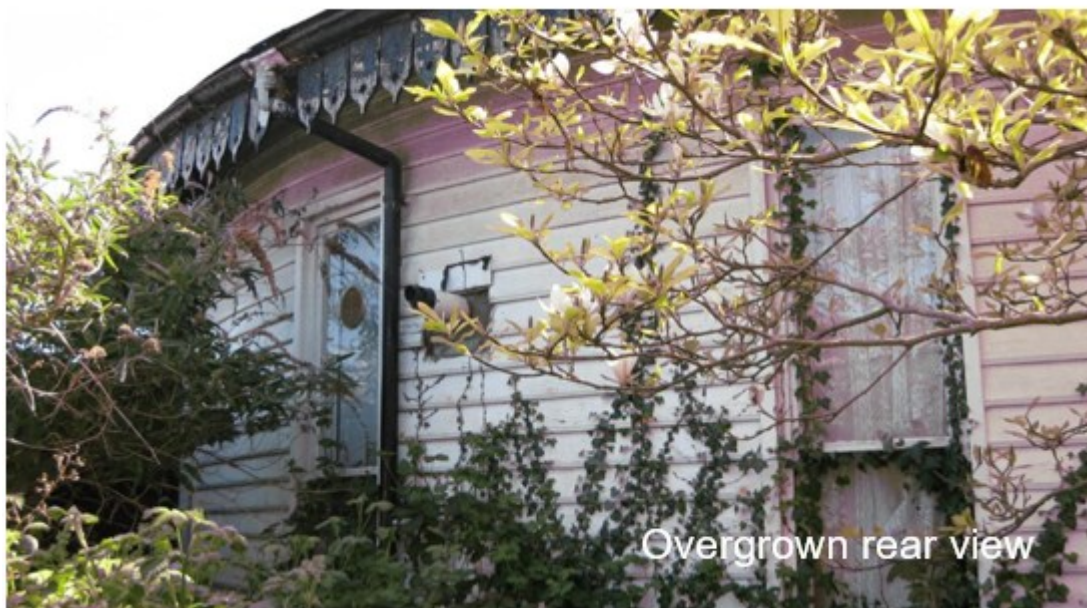
Mr. Peter Davies, of the Folkestone Reference Library, to whom we indebted for this information comments:-

As you will see from the enclosed cutting, this somewhat eccentric house was "purpose built". The evidence of local directories suggests that the house was built between the years 1874 and 1878. In the former year, Mr. Scott was living at 4 Albion Villas, Hythe, and in the latter, he appears at the "Whim".

Park Road, is, in any case, a relatively new road - it was not formed until about the middle of the 1860's.

Although there are two Henry Scotts in the Hythe section of Kelly's 1859 directory, the probable one is described as a grocer, etc., also a valuer, he having also a business at Ashford. We have a probate copy of his will, a very simple one, in which he devised his property to his son, John Paul Scott, in trust for his wife. He died on 3rd. November 1892 and the gross value of his estate in January 1893 was £1608.14.9d. Mrs. Scott appears to have lived on at "The Whim" until about 1896, as in the 1896-97 directory it would appear to be untenanted.

The fact that there was a windmill not very far away has caused some confusion to arise. The "Stade Mill", was at the extreme east end of Park Road, and was approached by a private entry out of Stade Street beside "Rose Cottage", and this was subsequently enlarged to form the entry to Park Road. The mill was built between 1821 and 1832 - long before Park Road was envisaged, and it survived until 1895 - long after "The Whim" was built



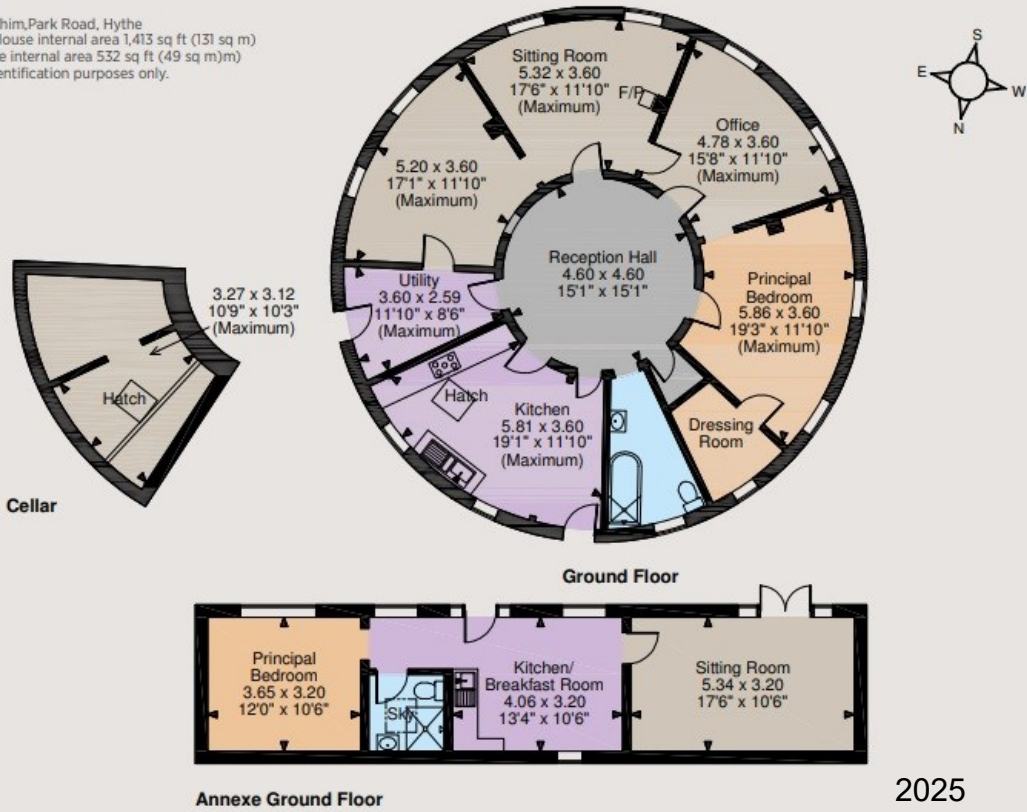
The Whim was recently sold earlier this year (2025).

We would like to thank Lawrence & Co, the estate agents in Hythe, for providing the excellent photographs of The Whim. We also extend our gratitude to the new owners for allowing us to display these images on the Hythe Civic Society and Hythe Local History Group website. This will help us share this unique historic building with future generations.

Iris Pearce
Chair, Hythe Local History Group
October 2025



The Whim, Park Road, Hythe
Main House internal area 1,413 sq ft (131 sq m)
Annexe internal area 532 sq ft (49 sq m)
For identification purposes only.





2025



Aerial view of the Whim in Park Road with Ormonde Rd to the left and Albert Rd to the right looking ahead to the sea and West Parade.