

Planning Officer's Report – LDCA JUNE 2024

APPLICATION	2024/13 – Retrospective Application for Installation of Fence
PERMISSION SOUGHT	Full Permission
REGISTERED	26 April 2024
APPLICANT	Jill Bolton
PARCEL	JT020034
LOCALITY	Coffee Shop, Jamestown
ZONE	Intermediate
CONSERVATION AREA	Jamestown Historic
CURRENT USE	Coffee Shop
PUBLICITY	The application was advertised as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Sentinel Newspaper on 16th May 2024▪ A site notice displayed in accordance with Regulations.
EXPIRY	30 th May 2024
REPRESENTATIONS	One Received
DECISION ROUTE	Delegated / LDCA / EXCO

A. CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

1. Sewage & Water Division	No Objection
2. Energy Division	No Response
3. Fire & Rescue	No Response
4. Roads Section	No Objection
5. Property Division	No Response
6. Environmental Management	No Response
7. Public Health	No Response
8. Agriculture & Natural Resources	No Response
9. St Helena Police Services	Not Consulted
10. Aerodrome Safe Guarding	Not Consulted
11. Economic Development	No Response
12. National Trust	No Response
13. Sure SA Ltd	No Comments
14. Heritage Society	Objection - Comments
15. Maritime	Not Applicable

B. PLANNING OFFICER'S APPRAISAL

LOCALITY & ZONING

The development site is located at the Coffee Shop, Jamestown, where it is designated within the Intermediate Zone and Jamestown Historic Conservation Area.

Diagram 1: Location Plan



PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The request is to retain the installation of a fence constructed within confines of the Coffee Shop boundary wall. The justification for installing this fence was as a result of anti-social behaviour and vandalism being carried out at the premises, where the developer believes this will act as a deterrent for perpetrators accessing the grounds, along with the construction of a gate at the western end of the premises. It should be noted that this application is solely for the fence, and the gate will be subject to a separate development application. The picket fence has been installed within the grounds of the Coffee Shop, affixed to boundary wall and protrudes above.

Diagram 2: Fence in situ



STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK & REPRESENTATIONS

There was one representation from a member of the public and one received from the Heritage Society.

Representation #1:

‘It is my view that the wooden fence erected at the coffee shop should not be given planning permission, due to it being ugly and unsightly. It is not in keeping with the area. It spoils the ambience and does not blend in. It does not support tourism. The walls, moat etc. should all be listed buildings and the coffee should be like any other business and have to comply.’

Heritage Society – ‘The Heritage Society is aware of the fence recently erected on the wall to the Coffee Shop. We therefore welcome the retrospective application for its retention. However, we will support a decision for its refusal for the following reasons.

We also note the sign on the fence is also subject to development permission but seems not to have been included in the retrospective application.

It is our understanding from the Crallan Report, that the entire area between the Terrace Wall and the Moat is part of the early 18th century fortifications being the gun platform or mount. The site on which the fence is erected is therefore part of the Grade I Listed Monument and within the Historic Conservation Area. Therefore, we believe the fence should be considered in that context.

The visual impact of the fence and sign is important within the setting of the Listed Monument because it is also the island's grand entrance. On the approach from the Arch or the Seaside, a symmetrical vista frames this important gateway in both directions; when entering the town, from the sea; and when leaving the town, towards the sea. This symmetry is in line with the classical architectural character of Jamestown. The new fence breaks that symmetrical character. It is important to retain the gateway and the vista, for both the people of St Helena and its visitors who enter and leave the island at this key point.

We sympathise and are concerned about the security issues recently experienced by the applicant. However, in this location, we believe the Listed Monument status of the site should remain paramount.

Over the years, before listed buildings were given legal status in 2014, many planned and unplanned structures have resulted in a cluttered appearance of the gun platform. In June 2021, an application to replan the Mule Yard was approved (App. No. 2021/22). This indicated the beginnings of a government intention to tidy up the area. The proposed fence does little to help that.

The process of maintaining the historic character of the fortifications is hindered by the continued lack of a Conservation Area Management Plan that will help guide both the planning authority and potential applicants.

The fence has a domestic suburban garden character within the setting of the historic fortifications and it detracts from the symmetry of this important gateway. For all the above reasons, the Heritage Society suggests the application should be refused.

The sign on the fence, has the unwelcoming characteristics of an 'armed response' sign and should be particularly unwelcomed at the island's grand entrance. The Heritage Society would also support a decision to refuse the sign.'

LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

The relevant policies of the Land Development Control Plan (LDCP 2012 - 2022) that are applicable in the assessment of the proposed development are set out below:

- Intermediate Zone: Policies
- Built Heritage Policies

OFFICER'S ASSESSMENT

In assessing the development with the relevant policies, the siting of the fence is not conducive with the current streetscape, where currently there is a boundary wall either side of the main road, wrought iron fencing and gates that forms part of the symmetrical vista when entering from the seafront or from the Arch, the addition of the fence is an oddity to this, where the design is not complimentary of existing features and does not add to the character or support the conservation of the area.