

## Planning Officer's Report - LDCA OCTOBER 2019

<b>APPLICATION</b>	<b>2019/61</b> – Proposed Demolition of Ruins at the Rear of the Property and Construction of Nine Accommodation Units
<b>PERMISSION SOUGHT</b>	Permission in <b>Full</b>
<b>REGISTERED</b>	01 August 2019
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Johnny Isaac
<b>PARCEL</b>	JT120005
<b>SIZE</b>	0.181 acres (732m <sup>2</sup> )
<b>LOCALITY</b>	Opposite Pilling School, Jamestown
<b>LAND OWNER</b>	Johnny Isaac
<b>ZONE</b>	Intermediate Zone/NCA
<b>CONSERVATION AREA</b>	Jamestown Conservation Area
<b>BUILDING STATUS</b>	Conversion, refurbish and development of the derelict grade 3 listed residential building into nine accommodation apartments
<b>CURRENT USE</b>	Residential
<b>PUBLICITY</b>	The application was advertised as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Independent Newspaper on 2 August 2019</li><li>▪ A site notice displayed in accordance with Regulations.</li></ul>
<b>EXPIRY</b>	16 August 2019
<b>REPRESENTATIONS</b>	Three (3) Received:  1. Mr Andy Pearce on behalf of Heritage Society
<b>DECISION ROUTE</b>	<del>Delegated</del> / <b>LDCA</b> / <del>EXCO</del>
<b>SITE VISIT</b>	Preliminary with Applicant during earlier part of 2018 (prior to submission)

### A. CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

- |                   |              |
|-------------------|--------------|
| a) Water Division | No Objection |
|-------------------|--------------|

b) Sewage Division	Objection - Comment
c) Energy Division	No Objection
d) St Helena Fire & Rescue	No Response
e) St Helena Roads Section	No Objection
f) Heritage	Objection - Comments
g) Environmental Management	Not consulted
h) Public Health	No Response
i) Agriculture & Natural Resources	Not consulted
j) Rock Guards	No Response
k) Property Division (Crown Est)	No Response
l) St Helena Police Services	No Response (as per Agreement)
m) Aerodrome Safe Guarding	Not consulted
n) Enterprise St Helena (ESH)	No objection
o) National Trust	No Response

**This report should be considered with the LDCA report, meeting on 4 September 2019, attached as Annex A and the decision to defer for reassessment of design.**

## **B. DEVELOPMENT DETAILS SUMMARY**

To Demolish the rear of the property and clear the site to erect a steel framed, two story building at the rear of the property with access stairs to first floor (six apartments: 4 x 2 & 2 x 1 bedroom) and to refurbish single story stone building at the front of the property adjacent to the street and conversion into a four bedroom apartment and add a steel framed constructed first floor to the refurbish stone building at the front of the property to create 2 x 2 bedroom apartments. The detail of the front building have been revised and with minor alteration to the rear building.

**Diagram 1: Location of the site**



Report Author: Ismail Mohammed (Chief Planning Officer)  
 Report Date: 2 October 2019  
 Application 2019/61

### C. Site Description

The area around the application is a mix of uses, although the general character of the area is mainly residential that are of various period of construction and of varying design and appearance. The whole area is historically important for the heritage of Jamestown and the Island. However, over the years there has been number of more recent developments and alterations to the buildings in view of these developments and changes, the area has lost some of its original character, however it begins to reflect the nature of change to modernise the buildings to meet the more current day standards and expectations.

**Diagram 2: Aerial view development site with adjoining buildings**



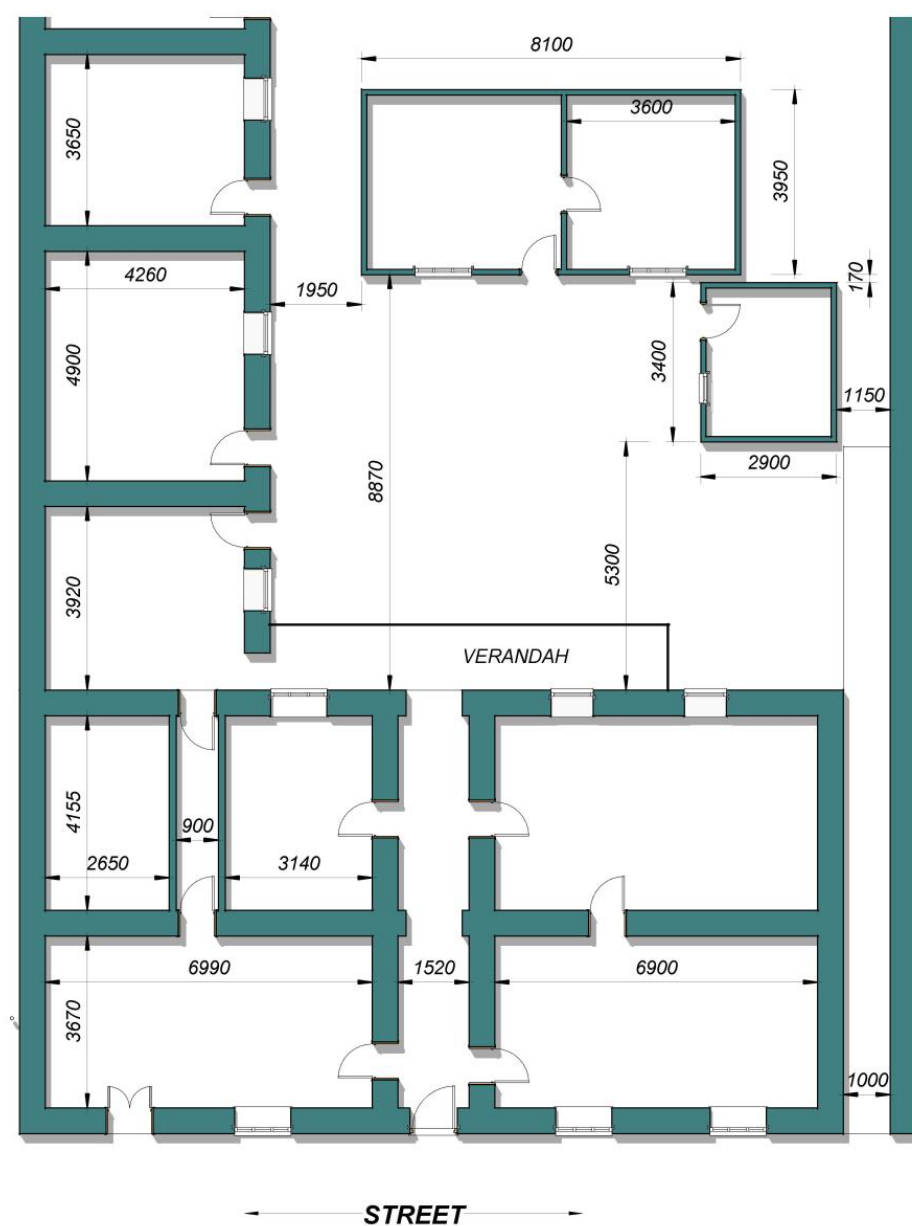
**Existing building on the main frontage**







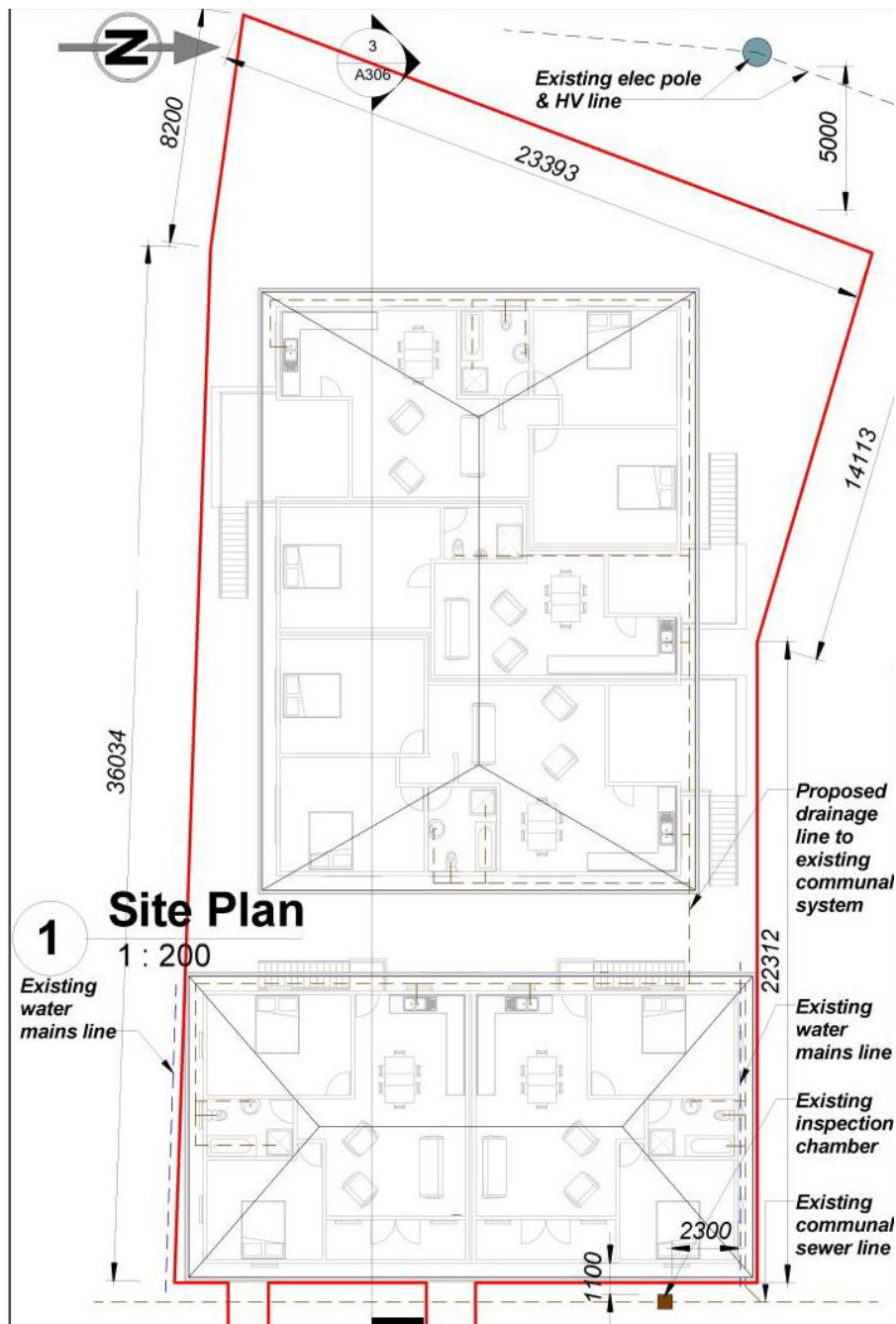
### Existing Layout



## Proposed Development

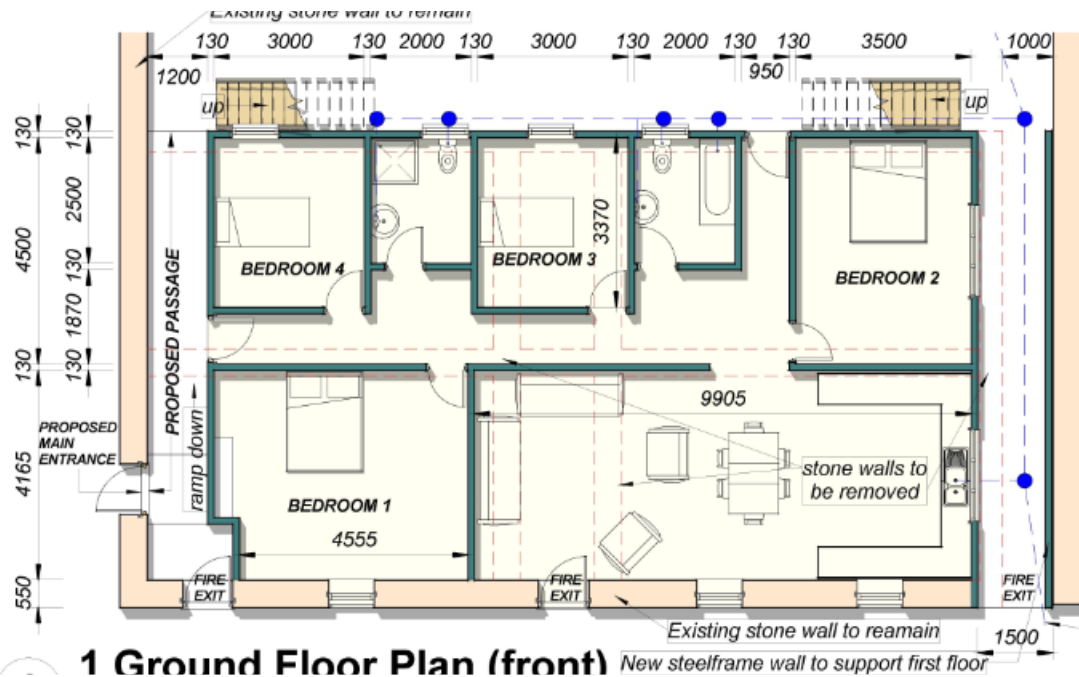
The proposal is to demolish all the buildings in the rear to construct a two storey building creating four-two bedroom apartments and two-one bedroom apartments. The street elevation of the main building and the eastern wall will be retained and the walls extended to create two storey building that will create three residential units (four bedroom apartment on the ground floor and two-two bedroom apartments on the first floor).

## Proposed Layout of the Development



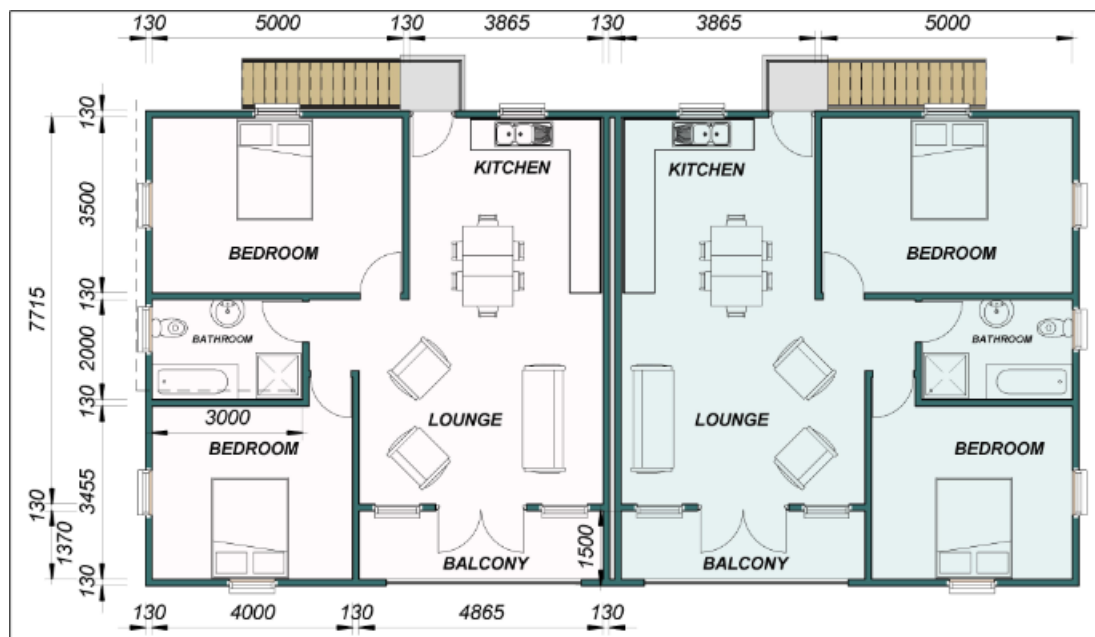
## Apartment Layout Front Building

### Ground Floor



The ground floor of the main building fronting the street has been altered to provide an access from the south-east corner of the site onto the pavement in front of the adjoining as advised by the members to ensure that new occupiers of the development are not coming straight onto the road as there is no pavement in front this building. This is accommodated by setting development away from the southern boundary wall to create an access path to the development in the rear. The access path on the northern boundary

### First Floor



has been retained to provide a means of escape in emergency, which is important for safety of the future residents. The proposal is to erect a second storey to the front building to provide two residential units utilising the existing, northern and southern, boundary walls.

The applicant wishes to proceed with a two-storey development, by building a first floor extension to the main front building and has also made some minor changes to the design details having considered the views of the LDCA members conveyed to the applicant by the officers. For the purposes of demonstrating why this is a better approach from design perspective and a better design solution in the street scene, the applicant has provided drawing showing the development with a single storey main front building for member to consider and is of the view that it does not provide good view (design frontage) of the development with a two storey building in the rear that is visible in the background. This distract from the architectural aesthetic of the area with front building dwarfed by the taller building in the rear, although it is set-back, however it is still prominent. The drawings below show the front street elevation to assess the design aesthetics of the two options that the applicant has considered.



**EAST ELEVATION (as seen from the street - front building single story)**



**EAST ELEVATION (as seen from the street with a proposed first floor)**

The changes to the elevation of the rear building are minimal with adjustment of the stairs, patios and balconies.

## **I. Officer Assessment**

In view of the discussion at the last meeting, the applicant was advised of the design concerns raised, particularly in respect of the impact of the two storey development for the main front building that would affect the view of church tower looking northward due mainly to slight bend in the road at the application site and the forward position of the building. The applicant was advised to consider alternative design options, in particular either setting the front main building back from the building line or reduce the height of the building.

Following those discussions with officer, the applicant has submitted revised details for the development. The access to the development for the future occupiers has been altered with an access/egress onto the pavement from the south-east corner of the site with a door provided in the southern elevation. Whilst previously no issues was raised regarding emergency escape, through these discussion the proposed design is now able to provide escape route for the occupiers by retaining the access in the north of the site.

The applicant consider that by setting the building back from its current alignment, would considerably reduce the area available for development and to achieve the volume of development. Therefore the applicant considers the most viable option is to design option and by providing elevation drawing of single storey front building and a two storey building, the officers can assess the impact of the development. Having reviewed the two design options, the two storey front building provides more appropriate design solution as it provides a more prominent frontage in the street, whilst the single front building retain the existing street view looking northward to the church tower, however it does not provide the best design solution when assess direct looking at the front elevation, the single storey building is dwarfed by the two storey building in the rear. With number of two storey building in the street scene, some direct on to the road, this building could benefit from being of two storey height and become a more prominent feature in the street scene.

In line with the future objectives to seek developer contribution from the developers in accordance with Section 25 of the Ordinance that would contribute towards the delivery/implementation of the future infrastructure requirement for the Island. This has been discussed with the applicant and he has agreed in principle that he would be willing to enter into an agreement with the Government in respect of this development.

Should the Members of the Board be minded to approve this development application and recommend to the Governor in Council to Grant Development permission, then



the details of the Developer Contribution can be discussed in the Close Section of the Agenda. The reason for this is that at present this is a voluntary agreement whilst the full policy and details on the level of contribution per residential unit are still being prepared and agreed.

In view of the re-assessment of the design options following deliberations at the last meeting of the Board, the development proposal against Policy BH 4 of the LDCP, this is considered to be the important point of discussion. The critical question is whether refurbishment and/or redevelopment of these buildings, and in particular given that the Grade 111 listed building on the main frontage is financially viable and what is volume of development the site is able accommodate in order to provide suitable living accommodation and provide a level of return on the cost for the developer.

As previously discussed that it is regrettable that given the physical and structural state of the buildings and their layout, it is would be difficult to retain and refurbish them and bring them back into suitable living accommodation that would also be financially and economically viable. Whilst the issues raised on behalf the Heritage Society are relevant, however, the reality is that from time to time buildings and structures in the historic environment will become difficult to repair, refurbish and preserve because they are not usable in the present time that they become relict and obsolete and difficult to maintain. In view if this, difficult decisions need to be made as such buildings and structures of heritage interest and value have to remain in active use and to be viable. Demolition of the buildings at the rear and partial demolition of the main frontage building to provide redevelopment of this site is considered to be acceptable.

In the absence of a conservation area management and any design guidance, the proposed layout, design, scale, mass and height of the new development in the context of the area and material availability on the Island and its remote location, the proposal is in keeping with the historic character of the Jamestown Conservation Area.

The proposed development is currently linked to the existing sewage system, however the future development will increase level of sewage discharge from the development that will impact current sewage capacity in the area. As regards to the comments from Connect, the applicant will be required to provide details as to the impact of the proposed development and the future capacity of occupiers to ensure that will not have adverse impact on the sewage capacity in the area. The development permission will also include an advisory restricting the occupation of all the residential units if it is found that the future sewage increase arising from the development impact the sewage capacity.