



## Open Agenda

surrounding development; use is not materially damaging to the amenity of existing development; where the site is in a National Conservation Area, the development complies with any Management Plan for that area; design and layout do not generally entail excavation nor making up of levels to a depth or height in excess of 3m and demonstrates the availability of safe vehicular access and all relevant services and will not be brought into use until these are in place.

### b) Sewerage and Storm Drainage: Policies SD.4, SD.7

Where sewage treatment is proposed by means of a septic tank, including from commercial or community development, development permission will be granted only where it can be demonstrated by soil percolation tests that disposal of effluent to a soakaway in the ground can be effected without risk of pollution to ground water or a watercourse.

New development - permission will be granted only where all parts of the sewerage system, including any septic tank and pipework, are laid underground apart from access covers and vents.

### c) Built Heritage: Policies BH1 c), BH5

Development in Historic Conservation Areas will be permitted only if it enhances and protects the character of the Area by reference to scale, proportion, details and external materials of the proposed development in relation to those of the Historic Conservation Area. Development and demolition within a Historic Conservation Area or affecting its setting shall preserve or enhance its character and be consistent with any relevant management plan for the area.

Design, materials, scale and siting of any development shall be appropriate to the character of the Historic Conservation Area and its setting.

## 6. RATIONALE BEHIND THE PROPOSAL

6.1 The custody suite at present is situated within the complex of Her Majesty's Prison (HMP) Jamestown; as such it has been condemned as not fit for purpose, either for now or future use following advice from the FCO Prison Adviser and the Human Rights Commission. Current conditions and facilities at the Prison and Custody Suite are substandard. The number of arrested persons is rising. The Human Rights inquiry highlighted that there is only two custody cells within HMP; the police cells can each accommodate one prisoner, which causes problems if there are more than two arrested persons at one time. On occasions the women's section has had to be used to house arrested male persons.

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6.2 The ultimate objective is to provide St Helena with a purpose built custody suite that is safe, secure and fit for use at Coleman House, that can deal with Police and criminal evidence prisoners and those interviewed under caution, as well as being somewhat future proofed against a potential rise in the criminal population.

6.3 St Helena Government intends to build a new prison in the Bottom Woods area of the Island, with a police custody suite as part of the prison project. The current building and environment does not lend itself to further development without considerable financial implications.

6.4 It has been highlighted that the site at Bottom Woods is not practical for the custody suite from a location standpoint, as it's a 25-30 minute drive from the current police station, meaning additional staffing requirements and increased time travelling between two locations. It is proposed that a purpose built suite of four custody cells be created at Coleman House, as it greatly reduces the cost than the proposed design at the new prison site and combats the issues raised above.

## 7. PLANNING BACKGROUND

7.1 In 2016 development permission was granted for the location of the Police Headquarters at former AVEC Building in Jamestown, now known as Coleman House (Ref 2016123). In recent years, there has been a number of development applications for alterations and development on the site for the new use on the site. The most recent development application (ref; 2019/74) was for development and alteration that also included external works to form an enclosed yard by constructing a wall in front of the existing northern elevation of the proposed custody cell. This will result in a wall being constructed to approximately 3.1m in height and would provide an open space for those held in custody/detained by the police for a small period of time to be able exercise and an opportunity for fresh air during their detention. There were also external works to provide sewage pipes within the carpark to the existing drainage communal drainage system.

7.2 Many of these development works have been on-going as additional works to improve accessibility with the building.

## 8. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

8.1 The application site at Coleman House, Jamestown, used as the Police Station, is located within the Jamestown Conservation Area and is within the Intermediate Zone for planning policy.

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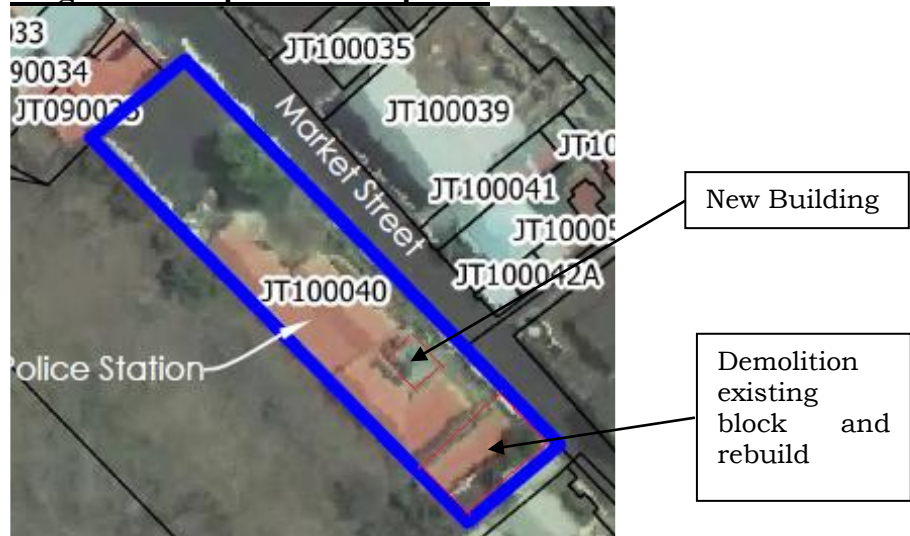
**Diagram 1: Locality**



8.2 Full development permission is requested to demolish the existing toilets, showers and crime scene investigation unit, and construct a custody suite.

8.3 The existing block to be demolished, which contains the toilets, showers and CSI unit, and will now be constructed within the open yard adjacent to the office blocks as a separate block. The footprint will measure approximately 39 square metres and constructed out of concrete block work and IBR roof sheeting. The roof will be of a hip design.

**Diagram 2: Proposed Development**



8.4 It is envisaged once demolition works are completed, ground works will be undertaken to create a platform at the same level as the existing office building. This will enable accessibility to all members of the public, relinquishing the need for ramps or lifts to be used on-

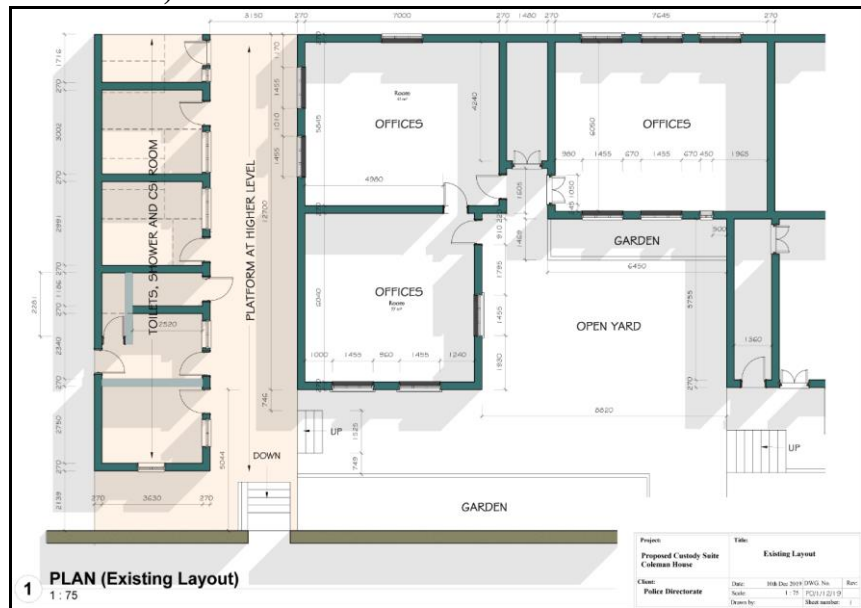
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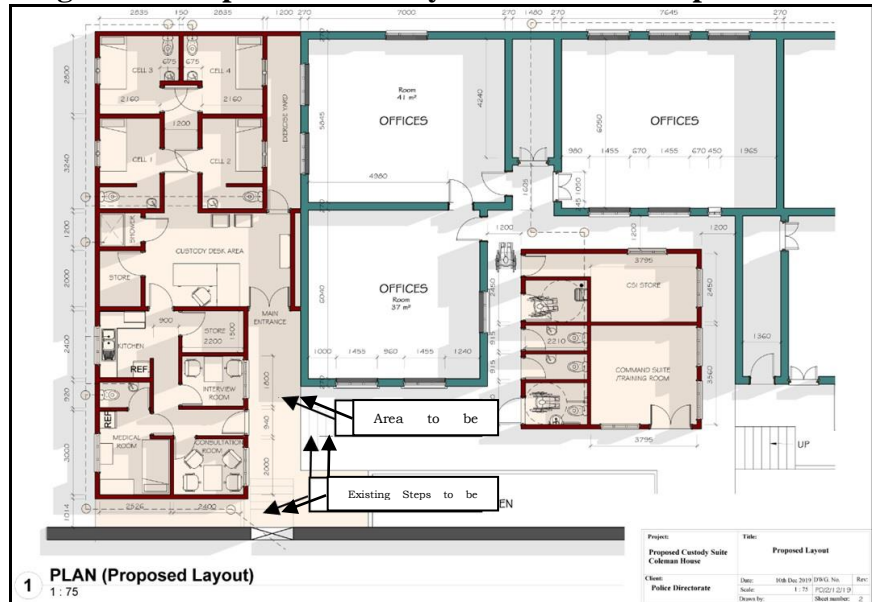
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site with exception of that which already exists.

**Diagram 3: Existing Toilets, Showers and CSI Room (To be demolished)**



**Diagram 4: Proposed Floor Layout of New Development**



8.5 Proposed is a 96 square metre building comprising a custody desk area, four holding cells, exercise yard, shower room, two store rooms, kitchen, interview room, consultation room and medical room with separate toilet, which will be constructed in its place. External materials consist of rendered block work and IBR roof sheeting for the roof. The roof will be of a hip design.

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### Diagram 5: Proposed Elevations



### Diagram 6: 3D Image of the Development



## 9. REPRESENTATION AND OFFICER RESPONSE

9.1 Two representations were received from the stakeholders; Sure SA Limited and St Helena National Trust (SHNT) and these are set out below:

9.2 Sure has highlighted that there is '50mm ducting containing fibre cable, which is feeding the building and is within close vicinity of the proposed Command Suite and CSI store building,' and have therefore requested that the developer contacts Sure technical staff when excavating in this area to confirm location of ducting. This can be conditioned to ensure protection of existing infrastructure is undertaken.

9.3 The representation from SHNT states that; the site is located within the Jamestown HCA and ground disturbance is proposed (e.g. the footing of the building to be constructed in the current yard), and have a requested that a Condition is included requiring the developer to check the Historic Environment Records for possible disturbance to

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any burial area due to excavation that is required and, if necessary a suitable specialists be consulted and appropriate steps taken to mitigate the disturbance of any human remains; all interventions that break ground be accompanied by an archaeological watching brief; and appropriate records be created and shared of any archaeology encountered.

9.4 With the history of the site and previous development applications, this is something that will be conditioned as such to ensure any artefacts and or human remains are not affected by the proposals.

### 10. OFFICER'S ACCESSMENT

10.1 The level of information submitted with this full development application is considered to be sufficient to determine design details of the development in the context of the development within the conservation area and most of the development is behind an enclosed boundary. The whole complex of buildings on this development are all of recent construction and little historic significance.

10.2 The proposed development will provide improved and more functional facilities for the police and immigration services that operate from the building. Whilst there is some historic significance of the site due to its historic use as a burial ground, the impact of the development can be managed through the use of appropriate Conditions.

10.3 The development falls within the Heritage Coastal Zone and can be supported in terms of siting, scale, layout, proportion, details and external materials and therefore can be supported by policies. It is recommended that Full Development Permission be granted subject to the conditions set out in Section C of the LDCA report attached as Annex A to this Memorandum.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS**

11. Executive Council acts as the Planning Authority in this case.

12. The development and construction of the custody suite at Police Headquarters will provide employment opportunities for the construction sector.

### **CONSISTENCY WITH INVESTMENT POLICY PRINCIPLES**

13. Not Applicable.

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### **PUBLIC/SOCIAL IMPACT**

14. The current prison and police custody facilities are considered to be substandard, inadequate and dated and not fit for purpose. The FCO Adviser's 2010 report raised concerns that the conditions within the prison may not withstand a challenge under Article 3 of the Human Rights Act 1998 and also recognises that a new purpose-built building would provide better facilities for prisoners.
15. The refurbishment of the existing building would not be able to adequately improve the facilities to meet with the current day to day minimum standards required of such a building to operate effectively and efficiently. In this regard, no adverse public/social impact is envisaged.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

16. There are no environmental issues arising from this development. Given the historic significance of the area and previous association with burial the applicant will be required to ensure that there is a watching brief for any potential archaeological disturbance likely due to excavation required for the building works.

### **PREVIOUS CONSULTATION/ COMMITTEE INPUT**

17. Whilst there was no consultation on these proposals prior to the development application, due to consultations on previous development applications, there is a reasonable awareness of the archaeological significance and issues in respect of the development site.
18. The Full Development Application was published in accordance with the requirements of the Land Planning and Development Control Ordinance, 2013 and Relevant Stakeholders were consulted.
19. Key Stakeholders have responded and their views have been considered by the LDCA.

### **PUBLIC REACTION**

20. Two representations have been received from the stakeholders in respect of the development applications. The issues raised by the representations have been responded to by the CPO in this report and more fully in the report to LDCA.
21. This could possibly generate public and media interest but there unlikely to be any issues of concern.

### **PUBLICITY**

22. The decision will covered in the media briefing following the meeting.

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### SUPPORT TO STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

23. This paper supports Strategic Objective 1.1 – ‘Ensure effective investment in physical infrastructure’. The development and refurbishment of the Police Headquarters and facilities, police custody suite, will continue to provide much needed modern facilities.

24. It also supports Strategic Objective 4.1 ‘Develop a safe environment’. This Relevant for inmates and more importantly the officers and other operatives in the custodial service.

### LINK TO SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN GOALS

25. Goal 7 of the SEDP is to improve public infrastructure, to provide an environment that promotes investment, attracts visitors and tourists, and encourages the return of St Helenians living abroad. A well-functioning custodial service that meets appropriate and internationally-recognized standards will support this goal.

SOB

### OPEN/CLOSED AGENDA ITEM

26. Recommended for the open agenda.

Corporate Support  
Corporate Services

03<sup>rd</sup> March 2020

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