

Planning Officer's Report – LDCA NOVEMBER 2021

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| APPLICATION | 2021/80 – Proposed Covered Area, External and Internal Alterations and Demolition Works |
| PERMISSION SOUGHT | Permission in Full |
| REGISTERED | 22 nd September 2021 |
| APPLICANT | W A Thorpe & Sons Ltd |
| PARCEL | FP0238 |
| LOCALITY | Wood Cot – Alarm Forest |
| ZONE | Green Heartland |
| CONSERVATION AREA | None |
| CURRENT USE | Residential (rented accommodation) |
| PUBLICITY | The application was advertised as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Sentinel Newspaper on 23rd September 2021▪ A site notice displayed in accordance with Regulations. |
| EXPIRY | 7 th October 2021 |
| REPRESENTATIONS | None |
| DECISION ROUTE | Delegated / LDCA / EXCO |

A. CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

1. Sewage & Water Division No Objection
2. Energy Division No Objection
3. Fire & Rescue No Response
4. Roads Section No Objection
5. Property Division No Response
6. Environmental Management No Objection
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. Sustainable Development No Response

Report Author: Paul Scipio (Planning Officer)

Authorised: Ismail Mohammed (Chief Planning Officer)

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| 12. National Trust | No Response |
| 13. Sure SA Ltd | No Objection |
| 14. Heritage Society | No Response |

B. PLANNING OFFICER'S APPRAISAL

LOCALITY & ZONING

The proposed development site is located within the **Green Heartland** where relevant LDCP policies GH1, GH2 & GH3 apply. There are no Conservation Area restrictions, however the buildings are listed.

Diagram 1: Location Plan



EXISTING:

The existing development comprises of three buildings all of different ages and style. The larger building is the main house of stone and mortar build that is very much intact bar some minor changes, the building next to it is a lower two storey narrow structure that acts as a link to the third building which was originally a single storey cottage but now is a two storey building with a semi-rendered finish and a pitched roof. The three buildings will be referred to in this report as "Main House", "Cottage" and the "Link Building".

The main house was originally a two storey standalone building and to the side a small single storey cottage. The cottage was extended to become a two story and a new building was constructed to link the cottage to the main building in later years.

The main house is currently a two bed, one bath on the first floor and a kitchen, dining, lounge, one bath on the ground floor. The external appearance features exposed stone walls with proud cement pointing (carried out in later years) and running sash windows.

The two story cottage is also a stone structured building with white painted semi rendered walls with open sash windows. The roof is hipped on the one side and attached to the link building on the other side. The alterations over the years of this cottage has no resemblance to the main building, with its rendered finish it is also very prominent in relation to the main stone building.

The link building is also of exposed stone structure portraying the endeavour to resemble the façade of the original main building. However, it's cement block corner stones, elongated concrete window sills and modern overhung roof fails in this attempt.

The additions and alterations to the main listed building (Grade 1) over the years has had very little regard to architectural and historic value of the building or its setting. Whilst it may have been a gradual building process of alteration and additions over the years, the cumulative effect is now apparent. There does not appear to be any record of development permission or consent of the works undertaken previously. However, the position and character of the listed building is as it is in the photograph to make one's own judgement in this respect.

Diagram 2: Image (Front Elevation – approx. 1950's)



Diagram 3: Image (Front Elevation – present day)



Diagrams 4 & 5: Ground Floor & First Floor Plans (EXISTING)

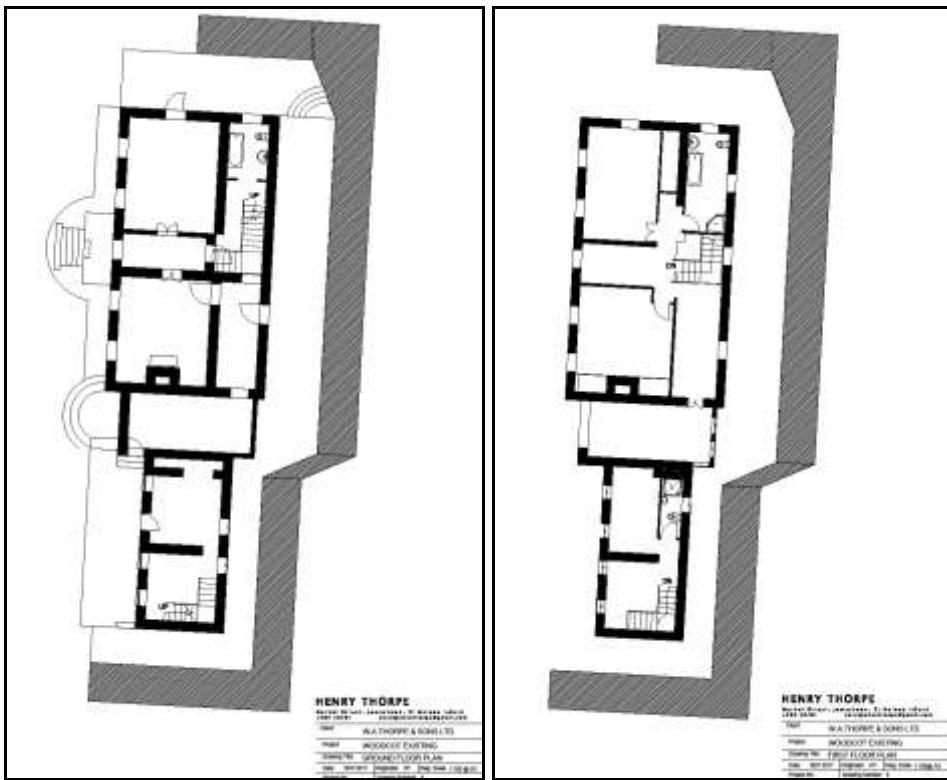


Diagram 6: Elevations (EXISTING)



BACKGROUND AND PLANNING HISTORY

In September 2019, the owner submitted a development application for the proposed alterations, refurbishments and for conversion of the property from two to three residential accommodation/units, reference 2019/81. This development was considered by the Authority at its meeting in November 2019 development permission was granted subject to number of conditions. However, it does not appear that any

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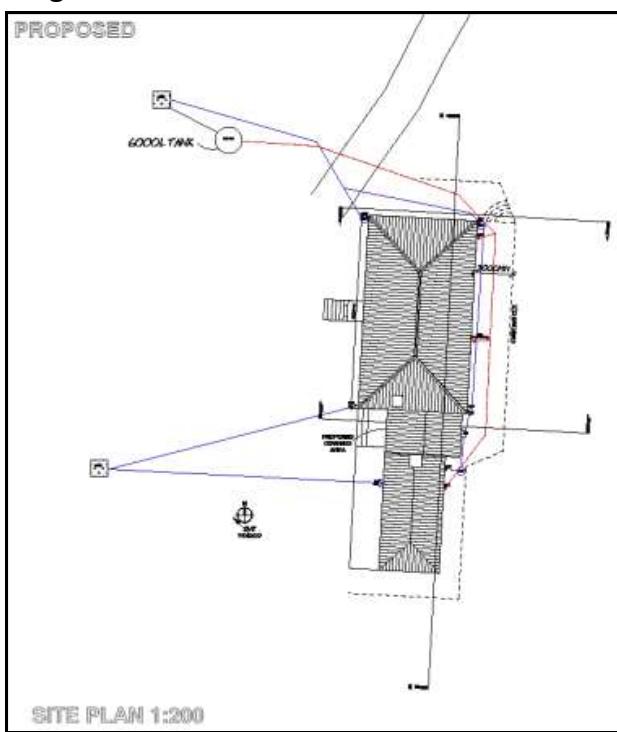
works approved under this development permission has been carried out and permission remains unimplemented. The proposed work involved was mainly internal alterations to the main building on the first floor with removal of internal and the addition of new partition walls to reconfigure the layout of bedrooms and utility rooms. The main external alterations was the construction of a more substantial two storey facade to link the two main buildings to create a new self-contained residential unit. The new façade on the front elevation would be a more prominent feature.

There was also a development undertaken in the summer of 2019 by the owners of this property without development permission that included the widening and resurfacing of the long access drive to this property. The owner was requested to submit a retrospective development application in respect of these unauthorised works, development application reference 2019/80. This application was discussed by the authority at its meeting in December 2020 and retrospective development permission was granted.

PROPOSAL

SITE: The entire site is 4.5 acres and enclosed with trees and shrubs. The proposed development doesn't change the footprint of the existing building thereby not acquiring additional land and thus doesn't have an impact on the site. Whilst there are changes to the appearance with new and adjusted windows on the main house and demolition of the link building creating a covered area, these are concealed within the forest setting and are in keeping with the style of the rest of the house, which complies with the Green Heartland Policies: GH.2 (b) & GH.3 (a).

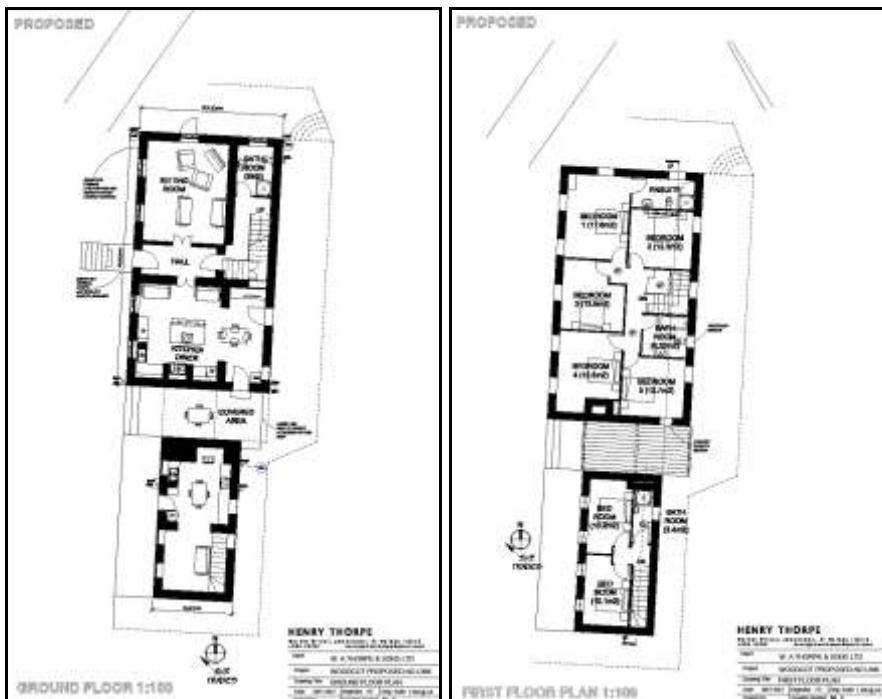
Diagram 7: Site Plan



MAIN BUILDING: The internal alterations on the ground floor are generally minor in their impact and include the removal of a section of a non-load bearing wall to create a large kitchen and dining room.

Proposed alterations to the first floor includes a new layout to convert from two bedrooms into five bedrooms with the main bedroom with en-suite bathroom. The walls on the first floor that continue through from the ground floor are 100mm blockwork and mirrors the ground floor plan layout. It is proposed to remove these non-load bearing block walls on the first floor and construct all insulated stud partitions to create the five bedrooms. It is worth noting that the existing block walls on the first floor are not part of the original structure and ends at 50mm below the roof truss beams thus rendering the walls non-load bearing, the entire roof structure is supported on the external stone walls.

Diagrams 8 & 9: Ground Floor & First Floor Plans (PROPOSED)



A new window is proposed at the rear of the building on the first floor to provide light and ventilation to the new bathroom. Whilst this additional window changes the appearance of the rear elevation it is sympathetic to the existing due to its size (1200x800mm) and design as a sliding sash similar to the existing.

Proposed conversion of double door to a sash window on the first floor on the south elevation as seen in image 2 above. The demolition of the link building would obviate the need for a door to connect the link building to the house. The original design had a sash window and therefore this proposal will reinstate a recreation of that window.

Diagram 9: Front and Side Elevations (PROPOSED)



On the MAIN BUILDING, it is also proposed to remove the proud cement pointing and repoint with lime mortar. The existing cement mortar was applied in recent years and stands out from and overpowers the stone wall. The proposed lime mortar will be flush with the stone and struck with a stipple brush therefore returning the building to its original state.

Diagram 11: Image of the proud cement mortar



LINK BUILDING: This is a modern addition that fills the gap between the cottage and the main house. It shares its side walls with the house and the cottage, the rear wall is 150mm concrete block and the front wall is exposed stone with concrete corner stones. The windows are modern casements and are not in keeping with the rest of the building. The top floor has an opening on the front elevation which has no frame and glazing and extends the width of the building. The link building is slightly set back from the main elevation but the eaves of the link building overhang which means they

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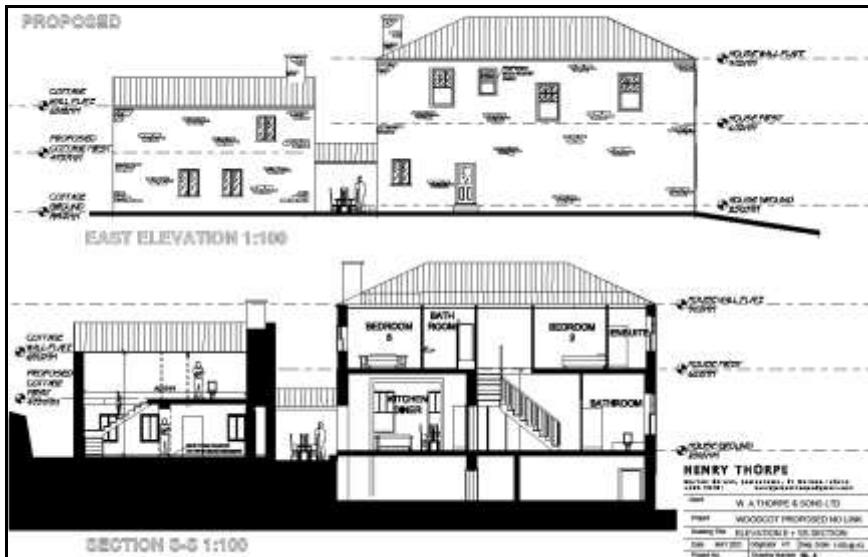
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are flush with the eaves of the main house. The proposal is to demolish the link building and create an open area that is covered over with a roof structure at the first floor level. The covered area will be further set back from the main elevation of the house in line with the cottage, thus allowing the main building to stand as the core feature.

Diagram 10: Rear Elevation & Section (PROPOSED)



Diagrams 11 – 13



REPRESENTATIONS

No representations were received from any statutory body or members of the public.

POLICY CONSIDERATION

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:

The Green Heartland:

- Forest concealment - GH.2 (b)
 - Form, scale, proportion and external materials follows traditional buildings and construction methods of the area, and no change to existing ground levels of 3m or more... - GH.3 (a)(b)

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Built Heritage

- Conservation of listed buildings – BH.1. (a)
- The layout, design, materials, scale, siting and use of any development shall be appropriate to the character and appearance of the historic asset and its setting – BH.2

OFFICER'S ASSESSMENT

It is evident from the photographs provided that some of the buildings within this development application have evolved over later years. Some of the additions and alterations to these buildings are unsympathetic for the historic fabric of the buildings that has undermined the character and impact of the main buildings. Whilst the development permission granted, but not implemented addressed some of the issues to restore the character of this historic building, the owners have now an alternative options for the buildings.

The MAIN BUILDING was originally a standalone unit with substantial details and features, but with the additions and alterations had lost much of its prominent character. The proposed alterations will restore its character and give the main building its prominence in this setting.

The COTTAGE was originally a single story, also standalone building that has evolved into a two story building with a hipped roof.

The LINK BUILDING is a newer structure and with its height and projected position was a detracting feature for the main building. Its removal is considered to be a huge improvement in the restoration of the main building. The covering over of the open space between the two buildings is not considered to be too prominent and will not be a detraction to the two buildings to stand independently of each other.

This property is Grade 1 listed and therefore, should be protected regarding its historical value in terms of its external form and appearance. It is unfortunate that continuous alterations and additions in later years has changed the external form and appearance of the building considerably. The alterations and refurbishments proposed for this development will reinstate some of the original features and character thereby enhancing the historic building by creating a more uniformed appearance.

In light of the above and that the development complies with the Policies listed in this report it can therefore can be supported.