

## Planning Officer's Report – LDCA FEBRUARY 2022

<b>APPLICATION</b>	<b>2021/100</b> – Proposed Renovation of a 19 <sup>th</sup> Century Building as a Historic Exhibit, not intended for Occupation
<b>PERMISSION SOUGHT</b>	Full Permission
<b>REGISTERED</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> December 2021
<b>APPLICANT</b>	British Napoleonic Bicentenary Trust
<b>PARCEL</b>	FP0417 (part)
<b>SIZE</b>	1.36 (5545m <sup>2</sup> )
<b>LOCALITY</b>	Toby's Cottage, The Briars
<b>ZONE</b>	Green Heartland
<b>CURRENT USE</b>	Ruins (Previously a dwelling, last known occupation 1960's)
<b>PUBLICITY</b>	The application was advertised as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Independent Newspaper on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2021</li><li>▪ A site notice displayed in accordance with Regulations.</li></ul>
<b>EXPIRY</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> January 2022
<b>PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS</b>	None
<b>DECISION ROUTE</b>	<del>Delegated</del> / <b>LDCA</b> / <del>EXCO</del>

### 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 Response
7. Public Health	No Response
8. Agriculture & Natural Resources	No Response
9. St Helena Police Services	Not Consulted
10. Aerodrome Safe Guarding	Not Objection
11. Sustainable Development	No Objection - Comments
12. National Trust	No Objection - Comments)

13. Sure SA Ltd

No Objection

14. Heritage Society

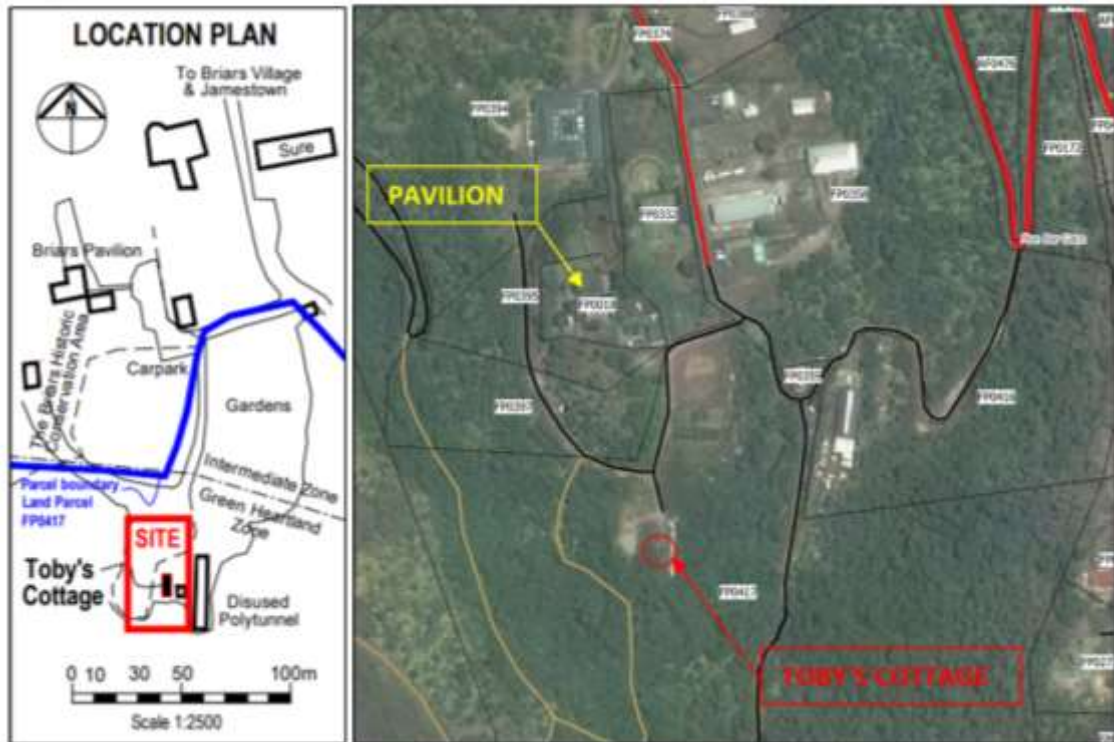
No Response

## B. PLANNING OFFICER'S APPRAISAL

### LOCALITY & ZONING

The development site is located within The Briars, south of the Briars Pavilion. The site is designated within the Green Heartland. There are no Conservation Area restrictions.

**Diagram 1: Location Plan**



### BACKGROUND

The British Napoleonic Bicentenary Trust considers this building may have been associated with slave accommodation for the Balcombe family at the Briars during the period of Napoleon's imprisonment, and also with the documented relationship between Napoleon and Balcombe's slave Toby. Thanks to a court-case report, it is known that the slave Toby lived in this house after having obtained a certain international notoriety for having met Napoleon, thus the house name: "Toby's Cottage."

The building was last known to be occupied in the 1960s.

**Diagram 2: Toby's Cottage in 1961 with shallow mono-pitch roof & veranda**



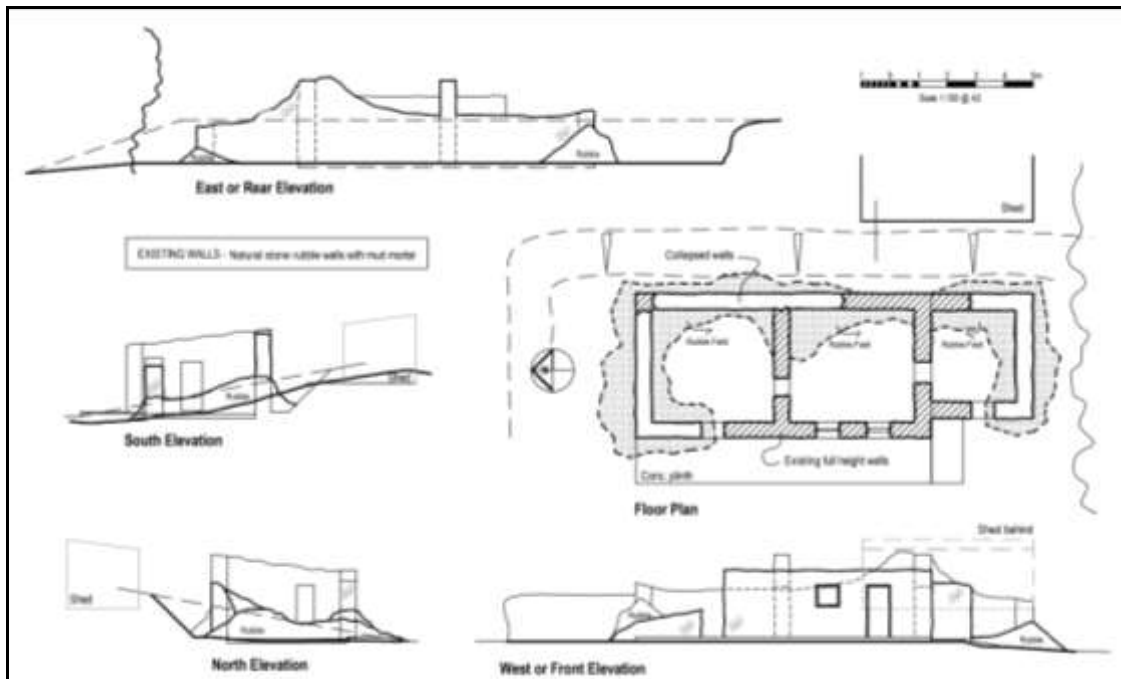
**EXISTING SITE**

Since the building was last occupied it has fallen into disrepair. At present, the building retains three rooms but the roof has collapsed. The walls are of stone with mud mortar and have crumbled to varying degrees but are nonetheless visible.

**Diagram 3: Existing Structure & Ruins – Present Day**



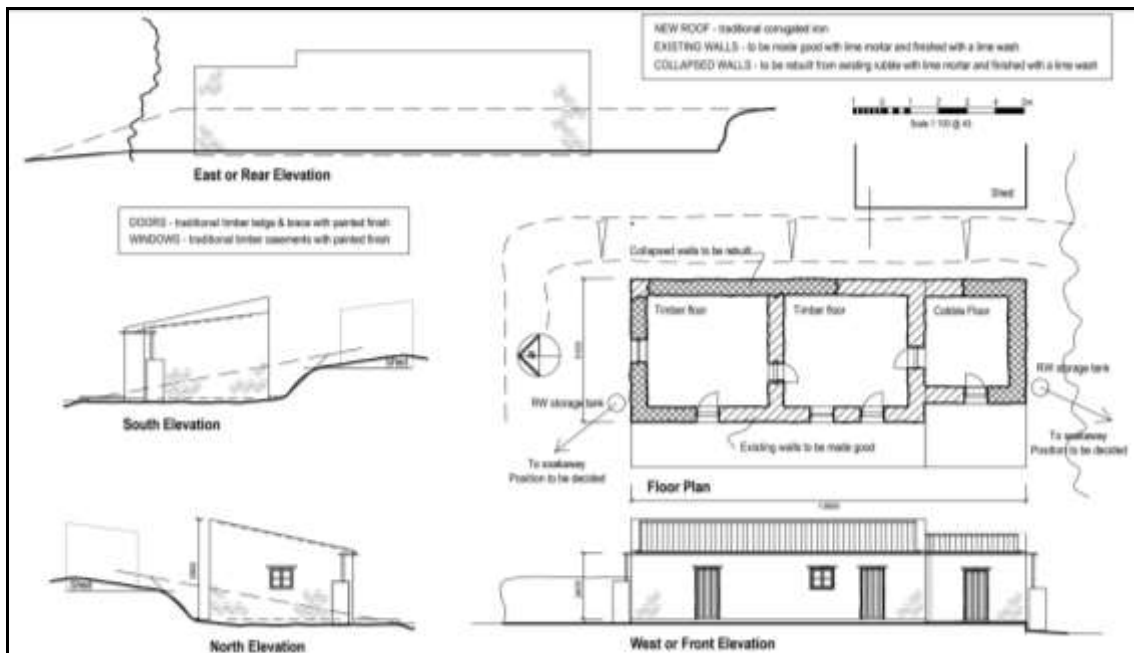
**Diagram 4: Plan & Elevations of Existing Structure**



**THE PROPOSAL**

The applicant’s intention is to renovate the building by re-erecting the walls using the existing stones with lime mortar and re-installing the roof. For practical reasons it is intended the building shall have a corrugated iron roof as would likely have been the case towards the end of the nineteenth century.

**Diagram 5: Plan & Elevations - Proposed**



## STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

**National Trust:** “St Helena National Trust supports this application and development. The Trust’s Strategic Aim 1 for 2021-2026 is to deliver conservation of St Helena’s built, cultural and natural heritage. The re-construction of a traditional St Helenian house for historical exhibition supports this objective.”

**Sustainable Development:** “This is a very positive development which will enhance the tourism product on the island, in line with SEDP goals.”

## POLICY CONSIDERATION

The proposed development is assessed against the LDCP Policies set out below:

Green Heartland Policy **GH.3:** *‘Except as provided for in policy GH2, permission will not be granted in the Green Heartland for development, which includes the creation of sleeping or catering facilities or new dwellings; save that permission will be granted for the extension of existing buildings and re-use, reconstruction and extension of existing derelict buildings provided the resultant floor area is not more than 93m<sup>2</sup> (1000 square feet) or not more than 75% larger than the original floor area, whichever is greater, and normally not more than 223m<sup>2</sup> (2,400 sq. ft.) in any case;*

*a) the resultant building follows, in its form, scale, proportion, details and external materials the traditional buildings and construction methods of the area, and*

*b) no change to existing ground levels of 3m or more are made in connection with the building or its surroundings, or in gaining access to it,*

Built Heritage Policy **BH2:** *‘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.’*

## OFFICER’S ASSESSMENT

As seen from the images above the development proposal for the reconstruction of Toby’s Cottage will mirror that of the existing.

In relation to the Green Heartland Policy GH3, the restoration would be carried out by using materials and techniques used at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which continued on the island until the 1950’s. For example the use of the stone from the existing structure with a lime or mud based mortar in rebuilding the walls as well as a new timber roof structure with corrugated iron roof sheets, mirroring what was likely existing in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The unchanged floor area also complies with the policy.

The development when completed will not be habitable but will become an historical exhibit where it will generate benefits for both the developer and the community and therefore accords with Tourism Policy T1 (a) & T3 / Built Heritage Policy B1.

Overall the development complies with the LDCP policy and creates an appearance that is acceptable in terms of siting, orientation, scale and massing and therefore can be supported.