

Planning Officer's Report - LDCA JUNE 2023

APPLICATION	2023/21 – Reinstatement of the Ex-Pipe Store into HM Prison (Removal of Blocked Doorway & Alterations to form Dormitory Cells)
PERMISSION SOUGHT	Full Permission
REGISTERED	4 th May 2023
APPLICANT	Alex Mitham, Portfolio Director for Safety, Security and Home Affairs Portfolio
PARCEL	JT050003
LOCALITY	Former Pipe Store, Jamestown
ZONE	Intermediate Zone
CONSERVATION AREA	Jamestown Historic Conservation Area
PUBLICITY	The application was advertised as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Sentinel Newspaper on 4th May 2023▪ A site notice displayed in accordance with Regulations.
EXPIRY	18 th May 2023
REPRESENTATIONS	None Received
DECISION ROUTE	Delegated / LDCA / GIC

A. CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

1. Sewage & Water Division	No Objection - Comments
2. Energy Division	No Response
3. Fire & Rescue	Comments
4. Roads Section	No Objection
5. Property Division	Refer to Stakeholder Feedback & Representations
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. Sustainable Development	No Response
12. National Trust	Objection - Comments

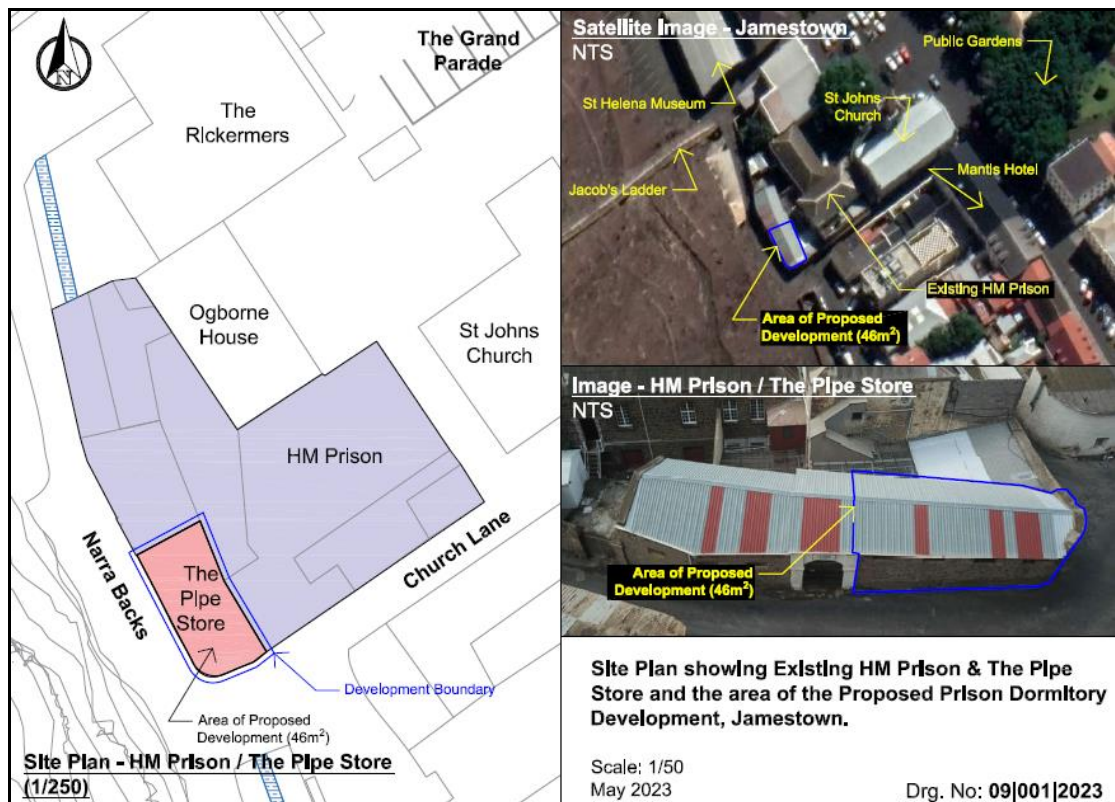
13. Sure SA Ltd	No Objection
14. Heritage Society	No Response
15. Maritime Authority	Not Applicable

B. PLANNING OFFICER'S APPRAISAL

LOCALITY & ZONING

The development will be carried out at the former Pipe Store, located next to the HM Prison in Jamestown, where it is designated within the Intermediate Zone and Jamestown Historic Conservation area.

Diagram 1: Location Plan



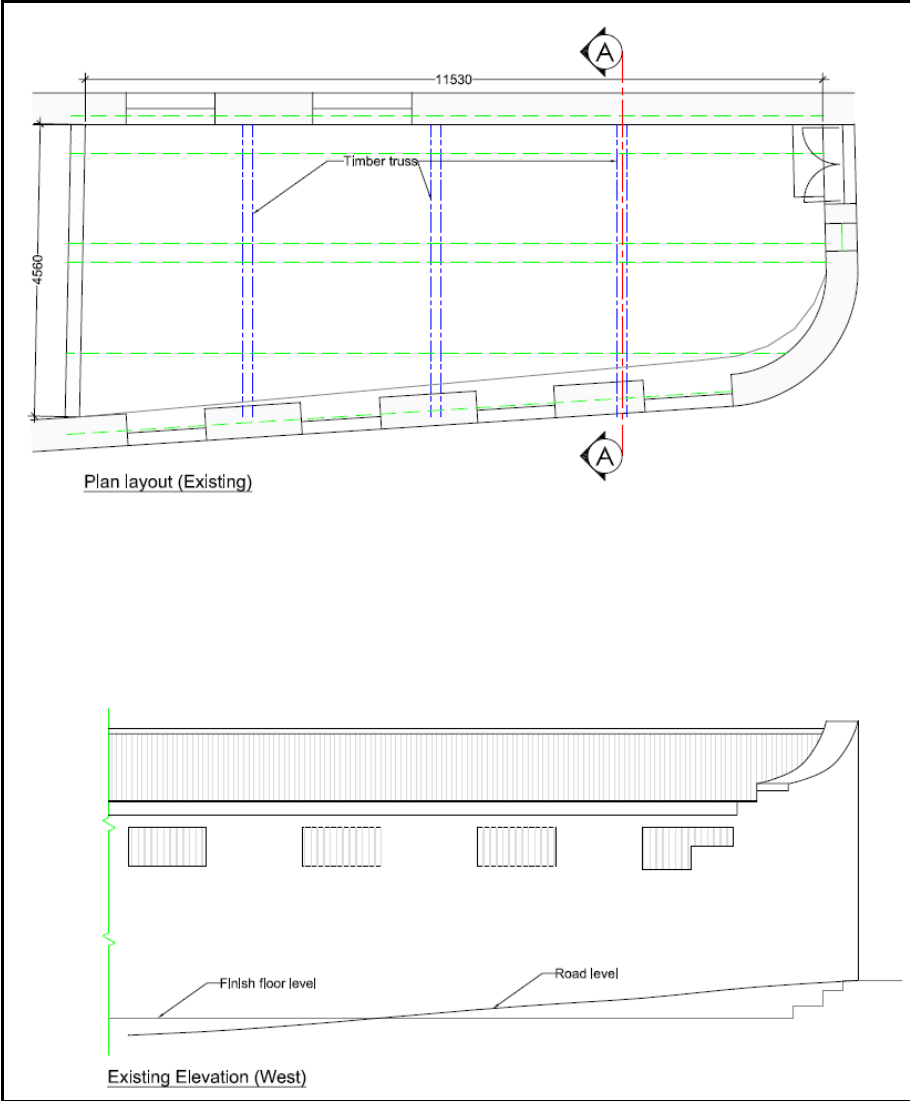
PROPOSED

The Pipe store is a Grade III Listed building that is currently not in use for a storage facility. Its last known use was for temporary storage for the exhumed Liberated African remains, however prior to this it was just general storage. Historically this building was part of the Prison complex and then converted to general storage, date unknown.

The request now is to reinstate this building as part of the HM Prison site, where some internal and external works are proposed. The proposal will involve internal works such as installation of stud partitioning to form cells, toilet and shower cubicles, which will be connected into the existing public sewer system, and the removal of a blocked doorway, which will provide access directly into the prison complex. Externally the building will retain its appearance with exception to the

proposed whirlybirds that will provide ventilation into the building. The rationale for this proposal is that due to the increasing imprisonment rates on the island, additional cells are of utmost importance for the HM Prison Service to increase its operational resilience to meet the needs of the courts. It was therefore considered necessary to expand the footprint of the current prison with a least imposing effective solution. This proposal will allow for additional prisoner accommodation with a more improved living accommodation based upon their human rights obligations until the new prison facility is constructed and in operation over the coming years.

Diagram 2: Existing Layout, Elevations & Section



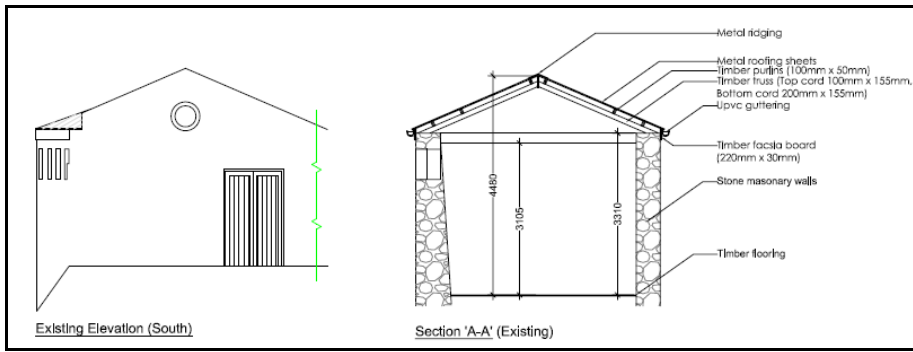


Diagram 3: Proposed Floor Layout & Elevations

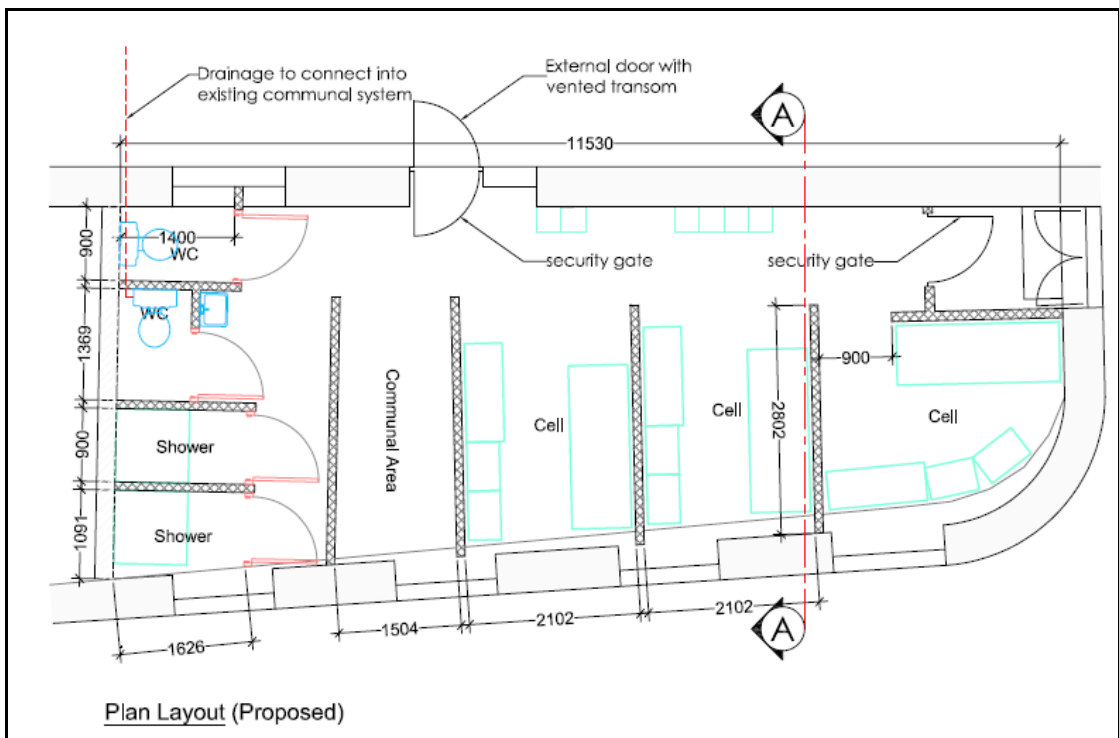
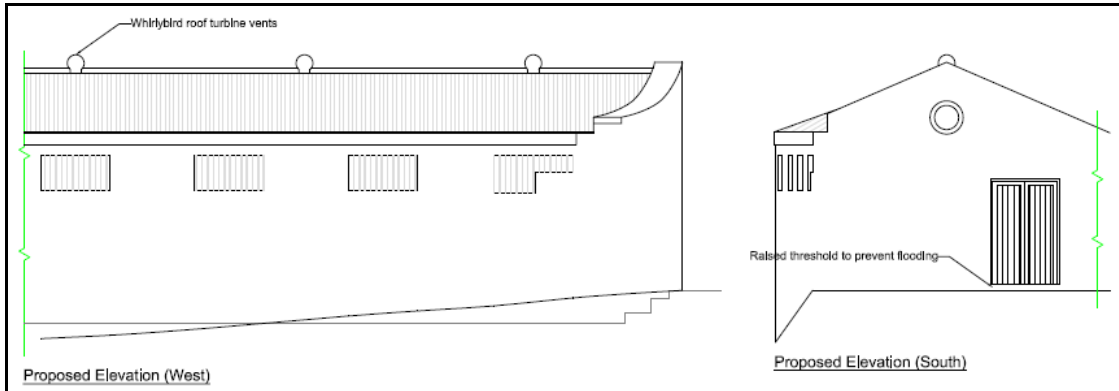


Diagram 4: Door to be reinstated



STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK & REPRESENTATIONS

No representations were received from any members of the public, however comments were received from stakeholders.

Connect St Helena Water & Sewerage – No Objection ‘SHG CE has confirmed with Planning that they will connect the sewer via an existing connection that connects the female WC to CSH system.’

Fire & Rescue Service – ‘The SHF&RS will have to have sight of a scale plan. As this building will be used for sleep accommodations, passive and active firefighting equipment will need to be installed.’

St Helena National Trust – Objection, ‘The St Helena National Trust (the Trust) understands the need to improve living conditions for those in imprisonment, and that additional space is needed due to the Prison at most times being at full capacity.

The Trust however, would like to object to converting the building currently known as the Pipe Store to provide additional space for the Prison, for the following reasons:

- 1) The building is a Grade III 18th century building

- 2) The building currently known as the Pipe Store was established in the 1800s, as early as 1827. Reference was made in 1874 by the St Helena Guardian, that it was known as the Colonial and Foreign Fibre Company's Works.
- 3) The building was built for the fibre works. The walls still have the bearings, which suggested use of bars above the Robey 6hp semiportable steam engine. It is believed a deliberate move for the building to be constructed over the Run.
- 4) The building currently houses a Robey 6hp semiportable steam engine that was manufactured in Lincoln, UK in 1893. Its working number is 9201. It was installed in the Pipe Store in 1895 (128 years ago) and remained in use until 1914.
- 5) Around the period of 2005-2008, the Trust took on the management of the Pipe Store. It was described then as "a vacant and neglected historic building." The Trust restored and converted the building to be used as a Flax Mill Museum. With funding provided by the UKOTCF we were able to complete this restoration using a total of £5080.97.
- 6) The Trust agreed to help another aspect of St Helena's history when temporary storage was needed for the exhumed liberated African remains. It was never intended for the remains, to remain in storage for 14 years.
- 7) Following the reburial of the liberated Africans, the Trust and the Museum started the preparation revive the Flax Mill Museum. A verbal discussion was held between the Trust Director and the Head of Infrastructure on 21st November 2022 regarding the Pipe Store, and its temporary use for storage. The Trust was actioned to find the original information relating to the preparation on a rental agreement for the Pipe Store and to register the Trust's interest, which we were doing.
- 8) Using the original buildings as the Flax Mill museum has a significant cultural value when interpreting history and heritage.
- 9) A new prison will be built, so this is only a temporary solution.

St Helena is heading down an undesirable road where heritage is destroyed for cheap and quick fixes. These are not seen as quick wins, but detrimental decisions to the conservation of St Helena's built and cultural heritage.

Whilst the Trust would like to maintain a position of supporting development whilst being able to conserve our heritage, we unfortunately do not agree with this planning decision.

Suggestions for alternative space: Ogborne House has been refurbished a few times, and therefore its cultural value is diminished.'

Property Division – Discussion has taken place with Property Division concerning comments raised by the St Helena National Trust representation; awaiting a response, which will be verbally reported at the Land Development Control Authority meeting.

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 proposal, the works to be carried out externally are the whirly birds to be installed on the roof, and the door opening reinstated into the prison courtyard. This is not considered to adversely impact the appearance, character of the building or the setting of the historic conservation area, as the whirly birds will not be visually intrusive, and is a common feature within the Jamestown roofscape. Internally, there are no works that will adversely impact the integrity of the building, where stud partitioning is proposed. These are temporary walls that can be removed. With regards to the St Helena National Trust representation, they have raised concerns over the use of the premises as a Prison, and suggested an alternative location. Alternative locations were looked at including Ogborne House, however the Pipe Store was the best option to avoid any major physical developments, where this building would remain part of the complex in comparison to the challenges faced with Ogborne House, such as the isolation of the building from an operational perspective, and physical works needed to convert the building into a secured facility. Given that the Pipe Store originally had an opening into the Prison area, this reduces the need for any significant works to convert the building, which also has the benefit of ensuring the facility remains within one complex with limited disruption, therefore making this building the optimum choice. However the long term aspiration to use this building for alternative purposes would be very much welcomed, once the new prison facility is built. Overall, the use for this building in the interim period as part of the prison facility can be supported until the new prison is operational.