

Planning Officer's Report - LDCA JULY 2023

APPLICATION	2023/29 – Proposed Renovation of the HM Prison Workshop for Additional Cells & Conversion of the Pipe Store into a Rehabilitation Area
PERMISSION SOUGHT	Full Permission
REGISTERED	8 th June 2023
APPLICANT	Alex Mitham, Portfolio Director for Safety, Security and Home Affairs Portfolio
PARCEL	JT050003
LOCALITY	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">▪ Independent Newspaper on 9th June 2023▪ A site notice displayed in accordance with Regulations.
EXPIRY	23 rd June 2023
REPRESENTATIONS	None Received
DECISION ROUTE	Delegated / LDCA / GIC

A. CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

1. Sewage & Water Division	No Objection
2. Energy Division	No Response
3. Fire & Rescue	The St Helena Fire & Rescue Service will need to have sight of these plans for the installation of passive and active firefighting equipment.
4. Roads Section	No Response
5. Property Division	No Objection - Comments
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	Objection – Comments
15. Maritime Authority	Not Applicable

B. PLANNING OFFICER'S APPRAISAL

LOCALITY & ZONING

The development will be carried out at the Pipe Store building, 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, which was parted into two, resulting in the north side of the building used as a workshop for HM Prison, and the southern portion used by the St Helena National Trust for the intended use as a Flax Museum. The request now is to renovate the inside of the workshop by the installation of stud partitioning to form three cells, communal area, two toilets and two shower cubicles, which will be connected into the existing manhole, leading into public sewer system. The rehabilitation area will then be utilised within the southern portion of the building, where the steam engine is located. The intention is to enclose the steam engine, and overlaying the existing timber floor with heavy duty rubber matting. 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

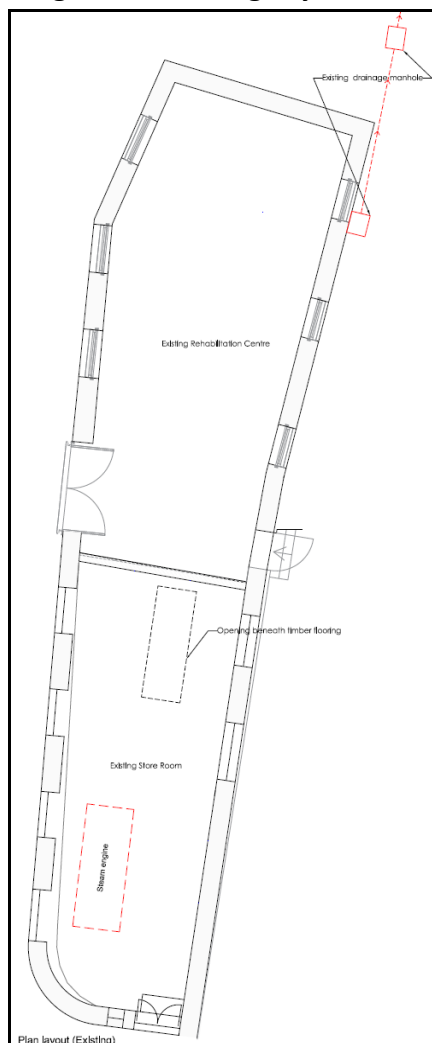
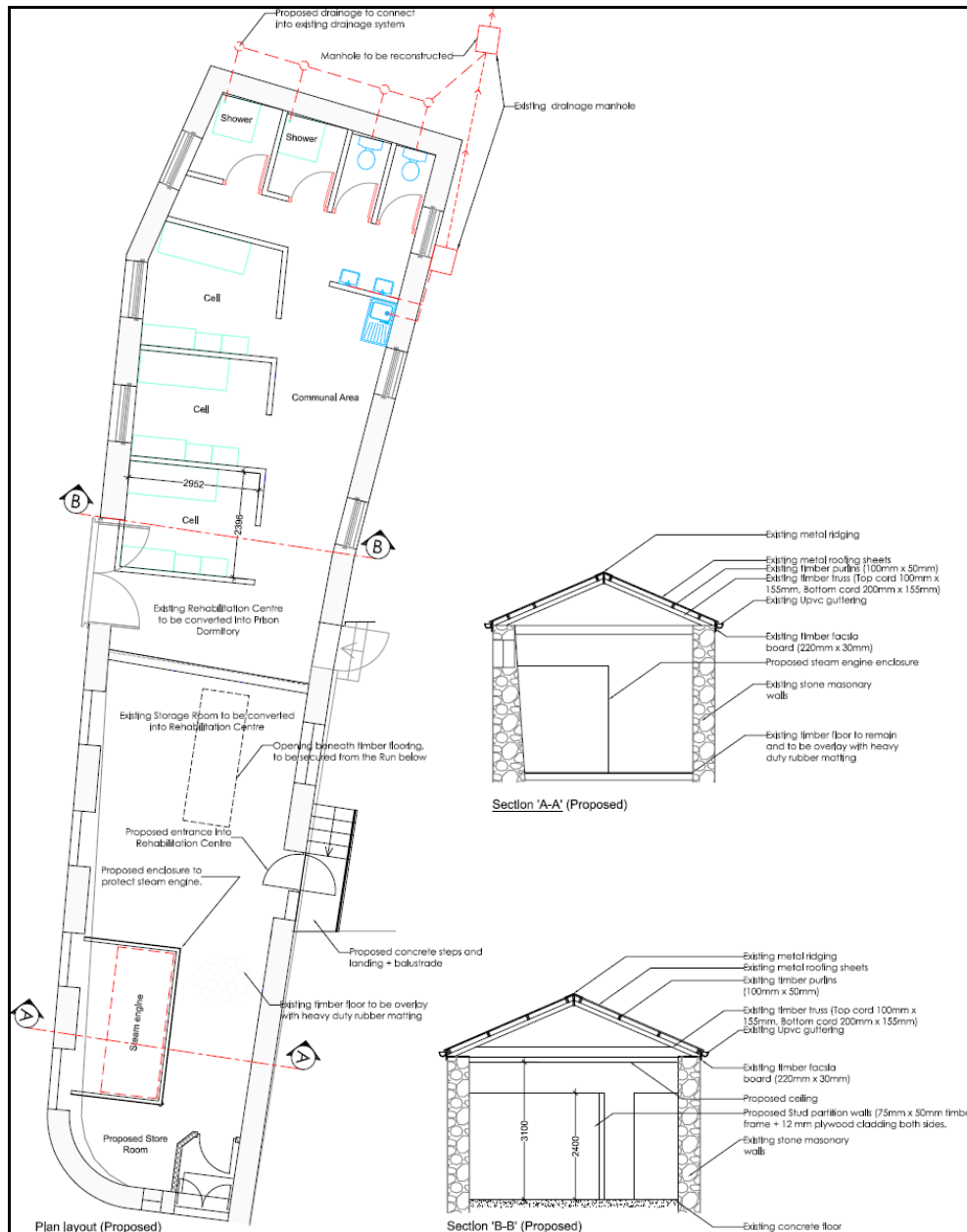


Diagram 3: Proposed Floor Layout



STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK & REPRESENTATIONS

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

St Helena National Trust – Objection: ‘As per the last application the Trust again raises an objection. The Trust would like to reiterate that I understands the need to improve living conditions for those imprisonment and that additional space is needed.

The Technical Services or Agent for the Application, met with the Trust and shared the designs for the new application.

The proposal to use the workshop instead of the Pipe Store to avoid any major alternations was welcoming news to the Trust. For this the Trust has no objection.

The request to use the Pipe Store for prion workshop, the Trust would like to object too.

Firstly, the new designs are very considered of the built heritage, and investment the Trust had made to restore the building to its current state. If this application is approved, the Trust would ask not to glue the rubber mat to the wooden floors. It would spoil the floors for future use.

The Trust would also ask, why does the Prison need the workshop, as rehabilitation work is allowed to take place around the island.

It is through the dedication of the Trust that the Pipe Store is in its current condition. The Trust took on the management of the Pipe Store around the period of 2005-2008, and through external funding, had restored a 'vacant and neglected historic building' and used as a Flax Mill Museum.

Despite the recommendation made by the LDCA for SHG to discuss the terms of use with the Trust, SHG did not implement this. The Trust following the LDCPA meeting in June, had reached out to the Head of Infrastructure asking for a formal response, but to this date have not received any.'

Heritage Society – Objection: 'The St Helena Heritage Society 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.

However, the Heritage Society would like to object to this application for the following reasons:

1. The building is a Grade III 18th Century structure and was established in the 1800's.
2. The intended purpose of the building was originally for the Royal Engineers as a carpentry workshop and it houses a Robey 6hp semiportable steam engine that may have been used for sawing.
3. The engine itself was made in Lincoln, UK in 1893 and may well be the earliest surviving engine of its type - It is of World significance, not just local.
4. The engine was installed in the building in 1895 and was still in use up to 1914. It was possibly used in the processing of flax.
5. The building itself is believed to have been purposely built over the run to dispose of material waste from sawing, and possibly to protect the Robey engine. Later the building was used as a flax mill.

6. Funds were eventually secured in 2006/07 and the St Helena National Trust restored the building to its current state, in which it was to become the Flax Mill Museum – an addition to the Museum of St Helena. In addition to the Robey engine, it also currently holds several flax industry machineries, which is to be a part of the exhibition.
7. In 2008, the Flax Museum was put on hold when an agreement was made to assist SHG with housing the remains of the exhumed Liberated Africans.
8. Since reburial of the remains in August 2022, the Museum and the St Helena National Trust had resumed preparations for the Flax Mill Museum.

The Pipe Store and its contents has never been a very well understood or appreciated building and this application risks destroying its significant cultural value for a temporary solution – as a new prison will eventually be built out of Jamestown.

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

Property Division: No Objection – 'No objection to this proposal due to being a temporary measure following the need of additional cells.

SHNT has been made aware that SHG will be honouring the lease as was agreed previously – assuming the proposal to use the Pipe Store on a temporary basis to extend the Prison is accepted, a formal agreement will be put in place once the prison service vacates the building the relocation of the prison.'

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 within the current Prison Workshop and steam engine room are minimal, where no demolition is required but a matter of installing stud partitioning to form the dormitory cells, showers and communal area is proposed. The works planned for within the steam engine room will involve just the removal of a previously boarded up door opening that was installed in the early 2000's, installation of rubber matting to protect the flooring and construction of an enclosure made from timber frame and clad in plywood, to protect the steam engine. These works are not considered to adversely impact on the building, and can be easily be removed without impacting the fabric of the

building. Concerns over the use of the steam engine room of the Pipe Store, where this room will now be used as a rehabilitation area, has been highlighted in the representations. The rationale behind the use of the southern section of the Pipe Store for the rehabilitation area is to ensure there is a facility accessible within the Prison complex, given the current area will be lost for the additional dormitory cells. Concern also was raised on gluing the matting, it was confirmed that no glueing will be needed. 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.