

Report To: The Planning Board

Date: 7th June 2017

Report By: Head of Regeneration and Planning

Report No: 16/0290/IC
Plan 06/17

**Local
Application
Development**

**Contact
Officer:** James McColl

Contact No: 01475 712462

Subject: Construction of four-storey hospice building at
Ardgowan Street/Nelson Street, Greenock



M. All rights reserved. Licence No. 10023421, 2017

SUMMARY

- The proposal accords with the intent of the the Inverclyde Development Plan.
- One representation has been received expressing concern over parking.
- Consultations present no impediment to development.
- The recommendation is to GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to conditions.

Drawings may be viewed at:

<https://planning.inverclyde.gov.uk/Online/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=OFJCXOIMJFH00>

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site extends to approximately 1144 square metres on the north-east side of the junction of Ardgowan Street and Nelson Street and falls within the Greenock West End Conservation Area.

The Access at Ardgowan Hospice building was granted planning permission in 1999. It is a steep pitch roof two and a half storey building which presents a curved elevation and roof to Nelson Street. The building has an integral garage on its Ardgowan Street frontage. Its external finishes are imitation stone, white-coloured render and natural slate. The north-western end of the site is occupied by the former Greenock Methodist Church, which is a Victorian building finished in grey/pink sandstone and green-coloured slate. The former church has a small off-street car park on its north-west side. The two buildings are built directly onto the street frontages.

To the north-east (rear) the site is bound by the side gable of a three storey Victorian tenement fronting Nelson Street and the back greens of other Victorian flatted properties, fronting Watt Street, in a mix of two, two and a half and three and a half storey heights. A two and a half storey Victorian flatted property adjoins the north-western side. Opposite the site on the south-eastern side of Nelson Street is the category A listed Greenock Sherriff Court. An L-shaped block of three storey flats dating from the 1980s and finished in facing brick and concrete roof tiles lies opposite on the south-western side of Ardgowan Street.

There are curved pavement build-outs on each side of Ardgowan Street's junction with Nelson Street which are equipped with pedestrian guardrails to direct pedestrians to a dedicated road crossing point. The pavement build out on the north-eastern side of the junction runs parallel to all of the Access at Ardgowan Hospice building's Nelson Street frontage. Running north-westwards along Ardgowan Street from the build-outs is formalised on-street parking. It is in layby configuration on the south-west side of the street and end-on configuration along the site frontage. Further pavement build-outs on the site's Ardgowan Street frontage serve to delineate the vehicular access to the Access at Ardgowan Hospice building's integral garage and an ambulance parking bay. North-east of the build-out on the Nelson Street frontage is a bus layby.

PROPOSAL

It is proposed to demolish the Access at Ardgowan building and the former Greenock Methodist Church building and to replace them with a three/four storey building containing an eight bed hospice at its third floor level. The proposed building serves to replace the operations of Ardgowan Hospice which are presently spread across its two buildings, which are the Access at Ardgowan building and the nearby former eye infirmary at the south-eastern side of the junction of Brisbane Street and Nelson Street.

The proposed building is predominantly three storey with a small section rising to four storey at the south-eastern end of the site to express the corner at Nelson Street/Ardgowan Street. The four storey section of the building has an inset entranceway at its ground floor and a roof which is in a V-shaped configuration. The three storey section of the building is flat roof. External finishes comprise blonde coloured stone at ground floor level with light-coloured facing brick to the building's upper levels.

Similar to the existing buildings on the site, the proposed structure is built directly onto the Ardgowan Street frontage but is setback behind a small area of walled garden on its Nelson Street frontage. A gated car park with space for three cars intervenes between the north-west gable of the building and the neighbouring tenement at 6 Ardgowan Street. An integral double garage accesses onto the gated car park. The submitted plans further detail that there is space for sixteen on-street parking spaces in end-on configuration along the Ardgowan Street frontage. The proposed building's rear elevation is set back approximately 2m from the rear garden boundaries of the neighbouring properties on Watt Street.

Accommodation within the building comprises a café/sitting room, kitchen, office, storage, a staff room and the above-mentioned double garage at ground floor; clinical support accommodation, toilet accommodation, a clinic, dining room, boardroom, outpatients

accommodation, physiotherapy room, office accommodation and a multi-purpose room at first floor level; the eight bed hospice unit (with rooms each incorporating a private inset balcony), a multi-purpose room and, an inset roof terrace on the Nelson Street frontage, at third floor level and; an education room and toilet facilities at fourth floor level.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

Policy TCR5 - Outer Area of Greenock Town Centre

Proposals for development in the five divisions of the Outer Area of Greenock Town Centre, as defined on the Proposals Map and below, should have regard to their respective roles, functions, character and amenity. The following uses will be encouraged and supported, subject to there being no adverse impact upon the amenity of the area:

A - WEST END (Civic, Office and Residential)

- Use Class 2 (Financial, professional and other services)
- Use Class 4 (Business)
- Use Class 8 (Residential institutions)
- Use Class 10 (Non-residential institutions)

B - CLARENCE STREET AREA (Mixed Use)

- Use Class 3 (Food and drink)
- Use Class 4 (Business)
- Use Class 11 (Assembly and leisure)

C - WATERFRONT (Education and Leisure)

- Use Class 3 (Food and drink)
- Use Class 4 (Business)
- Use Class 7 (Hotels and hostels)
- Use Class 8 (Residential institutions)
- Use Class 10 (Non-residential institutions)
- Use Class 11 (Assembly and leisure)

D - KING STREET AREA (Business and Residential)

- Use Class 2 (Financial, professional and other services)
- Use Class 4 (Business)
- Use Class 8 (Residential institutions)
- Use Class 10 (Non-residential institutions)

E - ROXBURGH STREET AREA (Business and Community)

- Use Class 2 (Financial, professional and other services)
- Use Class 3 (Food and drink)
- Use Class 4 (Business)
- Use Class 8 (Residential institutions)
- Use Class 10 (Non-residential institutions)

Policy HER1 - Development which Affects the Character of Conservation Areas

Development proposals which affect conservation areas will be acceptable where they are sympathetic to the character, pattern of development and appearance of the area. Such proposals will be assessed having regard to Historic Environment Scotland's SHEP and "Managing Change in the Historic Environment" guidance note series.

Policy RES1 - Safeguarding the Character and Amenity of Residential Areas

The character and amenity of residential areas, identified on the Proposals Map, will be safeguarded and where practicable, enhanced. Proposals for new residential development will be assessed against and have to satisfy the following criteria:

- (a) compatibility with the character and amenity of the area;
- (b) details of proposals for landscaping;
- (c) proposals for the retention of existing landscape or townscape features of value on the site;
- (d) accordance with the Council's adopted roads guidance and Designing Streets, the Scottish Government's policy statement;
- (e) provision of adequate services; and
- (f) having regard to Supplementary Guidance on Planning Application Advice Notes.

Policy RES6 - Non-Residential Development within Residential Areas

Proposals for uses other than residential development in residential areas, including schools, recreational and other community facilities will be acceptable subject to satisfying where appropriate, the following criteria:

- (a) compatibility with the character and amenity of the area;
- (b) impact on designated and locally valued open space;
- (c) impact of the volume, frequency and type of traffic likely to be generated;
- (d) infrastructure availability;
- (e) social and economic benefits; and
- (f) the cumulative impact of such a use or facilities on an area.

CONSULTATIONS

Head of Environmental and Commercial Services – The proposed development includes the removal of the existing Church and Access at Ardgowan hospice building on the site. The estimated parking requirement for these is 60 parking spaces. There are 5 parking spaces which can currently be accommodated on the site of the church. All other parking is on-street. Over the frontage of both buildings there are 8 on-street parking spaces, including 1 disabled bay. The proposed development will require the same level of parking provision and will provide 3 off-street parking spaces. All other parking will be on-street. The applicant has demonstrated that it can provide 16 on-street spaces, including 2 disabled bays, over the frontage of the new development. This provision introduces another 8 on-street spaces. Although the level of off-street parking is insufficient, the applicant has demonstrated that the re-development of the two buildings into one allows additional on-street parking to be provided. This, along with the location on the outskirts of the town centre, means that the provision identified is acceptable.

Presently, parking on the Nelson Street frontage of the existing hospice is allocated as disabled parking, ambulance parking and a loading bay. The proposal allows the reallocation of parking along the hospice's Nelson Street frontage to general use. This shall increase parking provision in the area.

It is further advised that a Section 56 Agreement for works to reconfigure parking on Ardgowan Street is required; the removal of the ambulance parking bay on Ardgowan Street and the associated re-configuration of on-street parking will require a variation to the Traffic Regulation Order for outer Greenock; on-street ambulance parking is no longer required as visiting ambulances shall be accommodated within the site; and there is a requirement for the provision of 16 cycle parking spaces.

Head of Safer and Inclusive Communities – No objections subject to conditions to control the spread of Japanese Knotweed, potential ground contamination, cooking odours, waste storage, external lighting, construction noise and noise insulation and advisory notes on site drainage, vermin, CDM Regulations seagull nuisance, extract ventilation systems, food safety and health and safety.

PUBLICITY

The application was advertised as a development affecting a conservation area.

SITE NOTICES

A site notice was posted as a development affecting a conservation area.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

One written representation has been received. It raises objections to the proposal.

The objector is concerned that demand for on-street parking in the area is high and that there is insufficient parking provision for the proposed development.

ASSESSMENT

The material considerations in the determination of this planning application are the Local Development Plan, Historic Environment Scotland's SHEP (superseded by the "Policy Statement") and "Managing Change in the Historic Environment" guidance note series, the consultation responses and the written representation. The determining factor is does this proposal comply with the Development Plan?

Policies TCR5 and RES1 of the Local Development Plan combine to locate the site within the West End (Civic, Office and Residential) Outer Area of Greenock Town Centre where residential amenity and character is sought to be safeguarded and, where practicable, enhanced. As a non-residential development in a residential area, the best measure to determine whether or not the proposal meets this aim is to assess it against policy RES6 which advises that proposals for uses other than residential development in residential areas will be acceptable subject to satisfying a range of criteria. The relevant criteria in this instance are (a) compatibility with the character and amenity of the area; (c) impact of the volume, frequency and type of traffic likely to be generated; (d) infrastructure availability and; (e) social and economic benefits.

Considering compatibility with the character and amenity of the area, the proposed building consolidates Ardgowan Hospice operations into one building. This consolidation within the same area shall, I consider, result in a neutral impact upon levels of local activity. Also key to the proposal's compatibility with the character and amenity of the area is the impact of the proposed design upon the Greenock West End Conservation Area. In this regard, policy HER1 advises that development proposals must be sympathetic to its character, pattern of development and appearance.

Historic Environment Scotland's "Managing Change in the Historic Environment" guidance note series "New Design in Historic Settings" advises that places and their context change over time and we tend to celebrate these historic changes when viewed from the present day. In taking their place in the evolving character of historic places new designs can also help realise their full economic, and cultural potential. There is a view that new buildings in historic settings should seek to replicate existing buildings in design, appearance and materials. While this may be appropriate in specific circumstances, for example where part of a larger architectural composition has been lost, in general it believes that new interventions in historic settings do not need to look "old" in order to create a harmonious relationship with their surroundings. Some of the best recent examples are contemporary design responses. This approach suggests an honesty and confidence in our modern architecture which will be valued by future generations. A modern building which disregards its setting is very likely to be regarded as unsuccessful now and in the future.

The overall scale and massing of the proposed building is similar to that of the Greenock Methodist Church and Access at Ardgowan buildings which presently occupy the site. Furthermore, the building's construction directly on to the heel of the footway on Ardgowan Street, the separation from the rear of the tenement flats fronting Watt Street; and the vertical

rhythm, height and blonde colour similar to the tenement buildings along Ardgowan Street all combine to further sympathise with the established townscape. There are numerous instances of buildings of distinctive design along Nelson Street, including St George's Church, the Sheriff Court, St Luke's Church, the former eye infirmary (which presently houses the hospice), the Access at Ardgowan building and the Reporter to the Children's Panel building on the corner of Brisbane Street. The individual design of the proposed building's frontage to Nelson Street is another example of a distinctive design and is a modern interpretation of the wide variety in architectural styles along Nelson Street. Given these circumstances, I am content that the proposal satisfactorily follows Historic Environment Scotland's design guidance for new design in the Conservation Area.



Looking at the impact of the design on neighbours, I note that while the separation of the proposed building from the rear of the tenements on Watt Street is similar to that of the existing buildings, the incorporation of rear balconies gives rise to the potential for overlooking. Accordingly, I consider it appropriate to attach a condition requiring the balconies to be equipped with 1.8m high privacy screening.



Taking all of the above matters into consideration, I consider the proposed design to be sympathetic to the character, pattern of development and appearance of the Conservation Area, thus satisfying policy HER1, and that the use of the proposed building is compatible with the character and amenity of the area satisfying criterion (a) of policy RES6.

While noting the concern of the objector, the impact of the parking, volume, frequency and type of traffic likely to be generated has been assessed in detail by the Head of Environmental and Commercial Services, who offers no objections to the proposal. I am therefore satisfied that criterion (c) of policy RES6 has been addressed.

As there are two buildings upon the site, I am satisfied that there is infrastructure in place. Accordingly, it can be determined that the proposal satisfies criterion (d) of policy RES6.

The applicant has advised that regulatory issues determine that the two buildings they presently operate from no longer meet their requirements and that, accordingly replacement accommodation combining their operations under one roof is required. The service provided by Ardgowan Hospice is much valued by Inverclyde's community and I am satisfied that the consolidation of its operation in a new-build facility at this location has significant social benefits to the population. I am thus content that the proposal satisfies criterion (e) of policy RES6.

Overall, I consider that the proposal complies with Local Development Plan policies TCR1, RES1, RES6 and INF4. It rests to consider if there are any material considerations that suggest planning permission should be determined contrary to the Plan.

Considering the observations of the Head of Safer and Inclusive Communities, I have no objections to the attachment of conditions on the spread of Japanese Knotweed, potential ground contamination and cooking odours. Waste storage, external lighting, construction noise and noise insulation are, however, matters controlled by other legislation. I am however content to attach advisory notes on these issues along with the other advisory notes the Head of Safer and Inclusive Communities recommends be attached on site drainage, vermin, CDM Regulations seagull nuisance, extract ventilation systems, food safety and health and safety.

Overall, there are no material considerations to suggest that this proposal should be determined contrary to the Development Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

That the application be granted subject to the following conditions:

1. That prior to the start of development, a brief statement confirming the absence or presence of Japanese Knotweed within the site shall be submitted to and approved, in writing by the Planning Authority. In the event Japanese Knotweed is identified this statement should be accompanied with a suitable treatment methodology. Development shall not proceed until treatment is completed as per the methodology and treatment statement. Any variation to the treatment methodologies will require subsequent approval by the Planning Authority prior to development starting on site.
2. That the development shall not commence until an Environmental Investigation and Risk Assessment, including any necessary Remediation Strategy with timescale for implementation, of all pollutant linkages has been submitted to and approved, in writing by the Planning Authority. The investigations and assessment shall be site-specific and completed in accordance with acceptable codes of practice. The remediation strategy shall also include a Verification Plan. Any subsequent modifications to the Remediation Strategy and Verification plan must be approved in writing by the Planning Authority prior to implementation.
3. That on completion of remediation and verification works and prior to the site being occupied, the developer shall submit a Completion Report for approval, in writing by the Planning Authority, confirming that the works have been carried out in accordance with the remediation strategy. This report shall demonstrate that no pollutant linkages remain or are likely to occur and include (but not limited to) a collation of verification/validation certificates, analysis information, remediation lifespan, maintenance/aftercare information and details of all materials imported onto the site as fill or landscaping material. The details of such materials shall include information of the material source, volume, intended use and chemical quality with plans delineating placement and thickness.
4. That the presence of any previously unrecorded contamination or variation to reported ground conditions that becomes evident during site works shall be brought to the attention of the Planning Authority and amendments to the Remediation Strategy (i.e. that has not

been included in contingency) shall not be implemented unless it has been submitted to and approved, in writing by the Planning Authority.

5. The development shall not commence until a detailed specification regarding the collection, treatment and disposal of cooking odours has been submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority. Such specification shall include precise details on the location of equipment used for the cooking and heating of food, canopies, grease filters, rates of air movement over the canopy, make-up air, air disposal points etc.
6. No development shall commence until samples of all external materials have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority: development thereafter shall proceed utilising the approved materials, unless the Planning Authority gives its prior written approval to any alternatives.
7. No development shall commence until full details of 1.8m high privacy screening for the rear balconies on the building's north east elevation have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority: the approved privacy screens shall thereafter be erected prior to the balconies being brought into use and retained in perpetuity.
8. The hospice building hereby approved shall not be brought into use until the off-street and on-street parking detailed on docquetted drawing L(00)021 has been completed.
9. The building hereby approved shall be equipped with 16 cycle parking spaces prior to it being brought into use: details of the required cycle parking spaces shall be submitted for the prior written approval of the Planning Authority.

Reasons

1. To help arrest the spread of Japanese Knotweed in the interests of environmental protection.
2. To satisfactorily address potential contamination issues in the interests of environmental safety.
3. To provide verification that remediation has been carried out to the Authority's satisfaction.
4. To ensure that all contamination issues are recorded and dealt with appropriately.
5. To protect the amenity of the immediate area and prevent the creation of odour nuisance.
6. To ensure a continuity of finishing materials in this part of the Greenock west End Conservation Area.
7. To prevent overlooking of the rear windows of flats in Watt Street.
8. To prevent obstructive parking on Ardgowan street and Nelson Street.
9. To ensure that the development is provided with cycle parking facilities that are commensurate with the requirements of the Council's Roads Development Guide.

Stuart Jamieson
Head of Regeneration and Planning