

Report To: The Planning Board

Date: 3 February 2016

Report By: Head of Regeneration and Planning

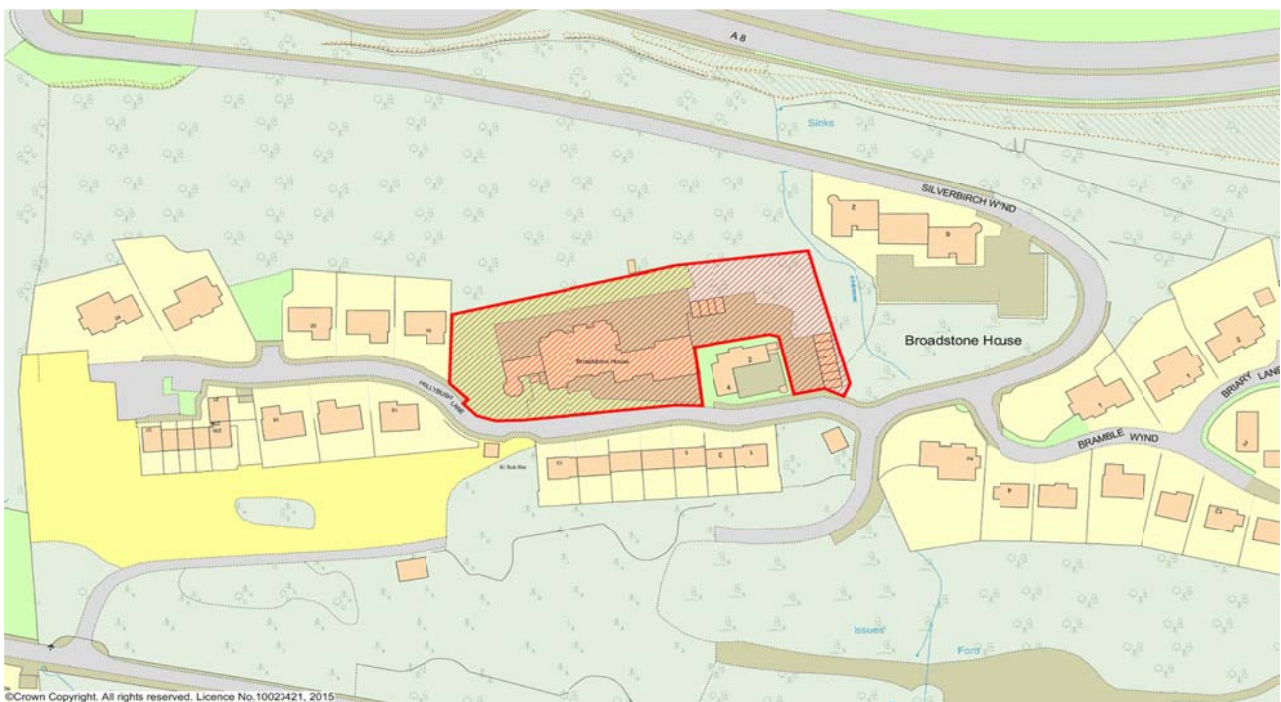
Report No: 15/0028/LB

Plan02/16

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Subject: Reconstruction, partial demolition and new build at former hospital building to form 27 flats at Broadstone House, Hollybush Lane, Port Glasgow



SUMMARY

- At the December meeting of the Planning Board the application was continued for a site visit.
- The proposal accords with the Inverclyde Development Plan.
- 3 representations have been received on issues including the loss of a David Bryce designed listed building, design, density, the applicant's duty of care, profit motivation and potential for the retention and restoration of the listed building.
- There have been no adverse comments from consultees.
- The recommendation is to GRANT LISTED BUILDING CONSENT subject to conditions.

BACKGROUND

At the December meeting of the Planning Board the application was continued for a site visit, subsequently arranged for 14 January, to allow Members the opportunity to consider the site and its environs.

SITE DESCRIPTION

Broadstone House (the former Broadstone Hospital), which lies partially derelict, is graded category A on the List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest. Historic Environment Scotland's detailed description is, "A large Scots-Renaissance mansion with details based on Newark Castle: rubble, 2/3-storey with 4-storey tower, crow-stepped gables, notable conservatory: panel with letters 'ADV' and 'PKC' interwoven and 'architect 1870'."

What were the grounds of Broadstone House occupy a site wedged between Old Greenock Road and Glasgow Road on the eastern edge of Port Glasgow. Partially wooded and covered by a Tree Preservation Order, areas of the site have been developed with an upgraded access road from Glasgow Road serving new build flats and houses. Residential development is presently ongoing on the southern section of the site, adjacent to Old Greenock Road.

Across Hollybush Lane is a new-build, one and a half storey terrace of seven houses, to the immediate west is a two storey detached house, and to the immediate east of the derelict section is the stable block converted to 2 houses. Elsewhere in the grounds there is a mix of flats, large detached properties and terraced houses.

PROPOSAL

The commencement of development within the grounds stems from planning permission granted in 2003 for the erection of 65 houses and 56 flats as enabling development for the conversion of Broadstone House into 15 flats. Listed building consent was also granted for the conversion works.

New build housing was under way in July 2004 when there was a significant fire in Broadstone House. No work had commenced on the listed building at the time. Consequently planning permission and listed building consents were granted for the reconstruction incorporating the shell of the building, firstly for 16 flats and then most recently in 2006 for 18 units. Two houses in the stable block have been completed.

Away from Broadstone House, several planning permissions have been granted across the site since 2004 to revise to house types and flats.

A phasing plan linking new build housing to the restoration of the listed building was approved in 2003, updated in May 2010 and again in 2012. The up-to-date phasing plan confirms that reconstruction of Broadstone House is to commence upon completion of the last of the 31 houses within phase 2 and to be completed in conjunction with the completion of the 42 houses within phase 3. Presently, development is ongoing within phase 2 during which 11 houses remain to be constructed.

The application which is the subject of this report proposes to demolish the most significantly fire-damaged section of Broadstone House (including its tower) and to replace it with a new-build structure of similar scale. To the east and west of the new-build remaining sections of the listed building are to be retained and restored.

The proposed new-build development ranges between four and six storeys with the tallest section of the building similar to that of the to be removed tower. The two upper levels have a smaller floorplan than those below and flats within them are equipped with roof terracing. Due to a difference in levels between the south (front) and north (rear), the new build has lower ground floor accommodation on its north side. Elevated ground floor flats at the rear of the building, first, second and third floor flats are equipped with balconies. Wall finishes comprise a mix of natural stone, render and zinc cladding panels. Windows and doors are grey-coloured aluminium. The building has a series of grey-coloured monopitch roofs.

The orangery with its domed tower is a key feature of the listed building and is to be retained and converted to a flat. To the east of the new build, the section of listed building to be retained is of part two storey/part single storey construction with feature crow stepped gables and stone-faced dormers; this has recently suffered a partial structural collapse, however following consultation with my Service and Historic Environment Scotland the applicant is in the process of arranging emergency works to partially dismantle, stabilise and support this weakened part of the building.

Another key component of Broadstone House is its grand entrance, which it is proposed to dismantle and reconstruct it as a freestanding feature forward of the entrance to the new building.

The combined new-build and restoration proposes 27 two bedroom flats with 58 off-street car parking spaces. The parking comprises 22 end-on spaces along the frontage with Hollybush Lane, 16 spaces to the west and south of the Orangery in an existing garage block and car park and 20 spaces to the east and north of the converted stable block in two existing garage blocks and a car park. The three garage blocks around the building were constructed around the same time as the conversion of the stable block and after the fire in 2004.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

Policy HER4 - Alteration, Extension and Demolition of Listed Buildings

There is a presumption in favour of the retention of listed buildings, and their demolition, in full or in part, will only be accepted after a full assessment of the importance and condition of the building has been undertaken. Proposals to alter, extend or demolish a listed building must respect the reasons for listing, be of a high standard and will be approved only where the proposed works do not adversely affect the special interest of the building and are satisfactory having regard to Historic Environment Scotland's SHEP and "Managing Change in the Historic Environment" guidance note series.

CONSULTATIONS

Historic Environment Scotland - National policy, as set out in the Scottish Historic Environment Policy (2011) notes that no listed building should be lost without all efforts having been made to retain it. The document sets out the measures that should be exhausted prior to considering demolition. Where a listed building consent application proposes demolition applicants will be expected to provide evidence to show that: the building is not of special interest; or the building is incapable of repair; or the demolition of the building is essential to delivering significant benefits to economic growth or the wider community; or the repair of the building is not economically viable and that it has been marketed at a price reflecting its location and condition to potential restoring purchasers for a reasonable period.

It notes that at a meeting with representatives from the Council's planning service and Muir Homes to discuss the future of the fire damaged building in November last year, the applicant stated that the listed building was beyond economic repair. Since then the property has been marketed for six months without any expressions of interest.

More recently a pre-application meeting was attended with the Council's officers and the applicant in June. At that time it was noted that if it could be demonstrated that there was no economically viable alternative to demolition, it would not object to the principle of a contemporary new building design, which retained and reused the surviving conservatory and east wing. That remains Historic Environment Scotland's view.

It asks that details of the proposed restoration of the conservatory and east wing of A listed Broadstone House be made available to demonstrate that the surviving elements of the building will retain their character and appearance. This should include like for like replacement of windows and doors and specification of roof slates.

Creatively maximising the incorporation of surviving, structurally sound elements of Broadstone House into the design of the new build residential block could enhance the sense of place of the new development. It asks that where possible, consideration be given to reuse of surviving decorative stonework.

Council Greenspace Manager - The planning application is accompanied by bat and bird surveys. The bat survey concludes that as long as recommended mitigation measures are undertaken the risk of death or disturbance to European Protected Species is negligible. The bird survey notes that swifts may be present within the building between May and July and recommends mitigation measures to secure their protection. The findings of the surveys are considered acceptable.

PUBLICITY

The application was advertised as a development affecting a listed building.

SITE NOTICES

A site notice was posted as a development affecting a listed building.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Three written representations have been received. All object to listed building consent being granted.

The objectors are concerned that:

- a historically important and architecturally significant heritage structure designed by David Bryce shall be lost.
- the design is inappropriate to its site and surroundings.
- the development is of too high a density and shall result in increased traffic on the local road system.
- the applicant has failed in their duty of care to safeguard the building.
- the proposal is motivated by profit.
- the remains of the listed building have proven to be robust, having survived winter storms over an extended period. A complete or, at least, partial restoration should be possible.
- there are examples of historic buildings elsewhere which have been in a condition similar to Broadstone House and which have either been restored in a more sensitive manner or preserved as a ruin.

ASSESSMENT

The material considerations in the determination of this planning application are, the Local Development Plan, Historic Environment Scotland's Scottish Historic Environment Policy and "Managing Change in the Historic Environment" guidance note series, the planning history of the site, the consultation responses, the bat and bird surveys and the written representations.

As the former hospital is Grade B listed, Policy HER4 applies. It sets out a presumption in favour of retaining listed buildings and sets out conditions for the demolition, including partial, alteration or extension of any listed building.

Key to the assessment of the proposal against policy HER4 is Historic Environment Scotland's favourable consultation response. Historic Environment Scotland's "Managing Change in the Historic Environment" guidance note series advises that no listed building should be lost without all efforts having been made to retain it. The document sets out the measures that should be exhausted prior to considering demolition. Where a listed building consent application proposes demolition applicants will be expected to provide evidence to show that the repair of the building is not economically viable and that it has been marketed at a price reflecting its location and condition to potential restoring purchasers for a reasonable period.

I share the concerns raised by residents that their long-held expectation that the Grade A listed building would have its exterior fully reinstated has not come to fruition. It is over 11 years since the fire which severely damaged the building and it remains substantially as a ruin. While the applicant has made some progress towards the restoration of the building with the completion of two houses in the former stable block, it has not proven viable to proceed with the remainder.



At the request of Historic Environment Scotland the applicant has marketed the building over a 6 month period in order to determine if any other party would be prepared to complete the approved scheme. None has been forthcoming. While, as objectors note there are examples of restoration elsewhere and it is suggested that a complete, or at least partial, restoration may be possible, Historic Environment Scotland is now in a position to acknowledge that the fire-damaged building is beyond economic repair. Under such circumstances the prospect is to leave the building as it stands subject to intermittent works as it deteriorates, or seek an economically viable alternative that retains part of the building. I have concluded (as has Historic Environment Scotland) that it is now appropriate to consider a compromise solution for the listed building else it becomes a total loss. It is considered that in principle an economically viable redevelopment of Broadstone House is in the best interests of the long term. If this does not happen then the benefit of this proposal in encompassing the retention of some of the most immediately identifiable elements of Broadstone House in its design is lost. As evidenced by the recent structural collapse within the east wing of the building time is now pressing if such a solution is to be feasible.



Clearly, while the new build section of the proposal is of modern design I consider that it pays respect to the section of listed building it replaces with reference to massing, height, setback position from the street, partial finish in natural stone and the reconstruction of the grand

entrance as a freestanding structure. I am in agreement with Historic Environment Scotland that the incorporation of surviving, structurally sound elements of Broadstone House, such as decorative stonework, into the design of the new build can enhance the sense of place of the new development. I also have no objections to Historic Environment Scotland's recommendation that full details of the restoration of the orangery and east wing also be reserved by condition in order to ensure that these surviving elements of the building will retain their character and appearance, including like-for-like replacement of windows and doors and specification of roof slates.



I note concerns raised on roads issues, but these are not matters that can have a bearing on the assessment of the application for listed building consent; these are addressed in the parallel application for planning permission.

In all of the above circumstances I am content that the proposal accords with the Local Development Plan and is an intelligent and understanding management of the historic environment, thus according with Scottish Historic Environment Policy.

RECOMMENDATION

That the application be granted subject to the following conditions:

1. 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.
2. No development shall commence until details of the proposed restoration of the conservatory and east wing of the A listed Broadstone House including like for like replacement of windows and doors and specification of roof slates have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.
3. No development shall commence until full details of all decorative stonework to be reused from Broadstone House in the construction of the new build residential building hereby approved have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.
4. Development shall proceed in accordance with the recommendations of the GLM Ecology Swift Apus Survey Report, Broadstone House, Port Glasgow August 2015 and the GLM Ecology Bat Survey Report Broadstone House, Port Glasgow August 2015.
5. The development hereby approved shall be completed prior to the first occupation of the Phase 3 new build housing as described in the phasing plan approved under planning permission 12/0273/IC.

Reasons

1. To ensure a continuity of finishing materials with the Grade A listed building.
2. To demonstrate that the surviving elements of the building will retain their character and appearance.
3. To maximise the incorporation of surviving, structurally sound elements of Broadstone House into the design of the new build residential block and enhance the sense of place of the new development.
4. In the interests of the protection of protected species.
5. To ensure the completion of the proposal hereby approved.

Stuart Jamieson
Head of Regeneration and Planning

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 – Background Papers. For further information please contact Guy Phillips on 01475 712422.