

**FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** **PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** **24<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2013**

**REPORT BY:** **HEAD OF PLANNING**

**SUBJECT:** **LISTED BUILDING APPLICATION – CONVERSION OF WEST WING INTO 11 NO. APARTMENTS AT WESTBURY CASTLE, ABBEY DRIVE, GRONANT (PARTLY RETROSPECTIVE)**

**APPLICATION NUMBER:** **050265**

**APPLICANT:** **MR. I. RINGWOOD**

**SITE:** **WESTBURY CASTLE, ABBEY DRIVE, UPPER GRONANT.**

**APPLICATION VALID DATE:** **5<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2012**

**LOCAL MEMBERS:** **COUNCILLOR S. WILLIAMS**

**TOWN/COMMUNITY COUNCIL:** **LLANASA COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**REASON FOR COMMITTEE:** **MEMBER REQUEST IN ORDER TO ASSESS THE IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT ON THE BUILDINGS LISTED CHARACTER**

**SITE VISIT:** **YES**  
**(UNDERTAKEN 17<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2013)**

Members will recall that consideration of this Listed Building application together with the previous planning application on the agenda (050264) were deferred at the Council's Planning & Development Control Committee meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2013. The application(s) were deferred to consider potential alternative options to access the site other than from Abbey Drive, having regard to the volume of objections received from residents. Alternative access arrangements have been explored by the applicant/agent and are addressed within the previous report on the agenda.

**1.00 SUMMARY**

This Listed Building application is to be read in conjunction with the

previous planning application on the agenda submitted under Code No. 050264. The application seeks consent for internal/external works at Westbury Castle a Grade II Listed Building located off Abbey rive, Upper Gronant, in connection with the conversion of the west wing into 11 No. self contained apartments. Once committee have resolved to make a recommendation on the application, then this is forwarded to Cadw for their formal consideration and determination. For Member's information the decision certificate can not be issued until this exercise has been completed.

## **2.00 RECOMMENDATION: TO GRANT CONSENT, SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:-**

### **2.01 Conditions**

1. Time limit on commencement.
2. In accordance with approved details and conservation survey.
3. Repairs to roof to be undertaken using natural mineral slate prior to any other repairs being carried out.
4. Treatment to stone flooring on lower ground floor to be carried out in accordance with method statement approved as part of this permission.
5. Samples of replacement rainwater goods to be submitted and approved.
6. Re-pointing to be undertaken in lime mortar.
7. Details of internal and external ironmongery including soil pipes, boiler flues and television aerials / satellite dishes to be submitted and approved.
8. Samples of all internal plaster to be submitted and approved.
9. No damp proof course or insulated plasterboard to be used.
10. Photographic Survey to be undertaken prior to commencement of further development.

## **3.00 CONSULTATIONS**

### **3.01 Local Member Councillor S. Williams**

Request site visit and planning committee determination in order to assess impact of development on the buildings listed character.

### **Llanasa Community Council**

The Council objects strongly to the proposed development on the following grounds:-

1. It is not considered to be suitable development for the grade 11\* listed building.
2. There will be a considerable increase in the number of vehicles using Abbey Drive, which at one point is single lane, and will

create additional danger to other road users, especially pedestrians.

3. Any further access onto the A548 should be strongly resisted especially as the County Council has drawn up a scheme to improve the accident black spot.

The Georgian Group

No objection to the principle of conversion subject to control over the use of materials and use of appropriate building techniques.

Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust

Recommend that a photographic record of the building is undertaken in order to record the architectural style.

The Victorian Society

No response received.

**4.00 PUBLICITY**

4.01 Press Notice, Site Notice, Neighbour Notification

4 letters of objection received, the main concerns of which relate to:-

- Inadequacy of access from Abbey Drive to serve the proposed development
- Partly retrospective nature of the conversion of the building into residential accommodation

**5.00 SITE HISTORY**

5.01 **1019/89**

Listed Building Application – Part demolition, alterations and extensions to form hotel.

Permitted 20<sup>th</sup> March 1990

**1050/89**

Alterations and extensions to form hotel.

Refused 10<sup>th</sup> June 1993

**267/92**

Change of use to antiques, arts and crafts centre.

Refused 10<sup>th</sup> June 1993

**6.00 PLANNING POLICIES**

6.01 Flintshire Unitary Development Plan

Policy HE1 – Development Affecting Conservation Areas.

Policy HE2 – Development Affecting Listed Buildings & Their Settings.

Policy HE8 – Recording of Historic Features.

Additional Guidance

Welsh Office Circular 61/96 – Historic Buildings & Conservation Areas.

**7.00 PLANNING APPRAISAL**

7.01 Introduction

Westbury Castle a Grade II Listed Building is located within the open countryside and a conservation area approximately 0.3 km to the north-east of the settlement boundary of Upper Gronant.

7.02 The property was originally built as a family residence in 1829 and was later converted into a convent building for a closed Order of Benedictine nuns in 1921.

7.03 The main body of the building which is formally known as 'Talacre Hall' is in occupancy as a single residence. The annexe which is physically attached to the main residence and known as the west wing is the subject of this application. This section of the building is thought to be the former service wing associated with the convent and is currently vacant.

7.04 Proposed Development

This application which is partly retrospective proposes the conversion of the west wing into 11 No. one and two bed apartments. The accommodation is proposed over four floors including a basement level opening out onto an enclosed courtyard.

7.05 For Members information conversion work has been carried out by the previous owner on the creation of 3 No. apartments which has included the redecoration and the fitting out of kitchen and bathroom spaces. These apartments whilst they may have previously been occupied are currently vacant

7.06 This application seeks to regularise this situation and also proposes the conversion of the remainder of the west wing into a further 8 apartments providing for 11 No. units in total.

7.07 The proposed works involve adaptation of the building to allow the flats to be created and where alterations to the buildings fabric is proposed, ensuring that these are carried out sympathetically to ensure that the blocking up of any internal openings, retains the aspect of their former positions and appearance.

7.08 It is also proposed to retain where possible and match where required original features such as skirting boards, architraving, fireplaces, stone flooring and windows/doors. The external appearance of the building will not be altered save for the replacement of window frames in accordance with an agreed historic form and pattern where required due to their physical deterioration.

7.09 Special Architectural or Historic Character and Appearance

It is considered that the main issue to be taken into account in determination of this application focuses on whether the proposed internal/external works and alterations have an adverse effect on the buildings special architectural or historic appearance.

7.10 To this effect, the applicant's agent has been in detailed discussions/negotiations with the officers, in order to ensure that the works required to facilitate the conversion of the building into residential use will not have an adverse impact on the special architectural and historic character and appearance of the building. These specific details are now considered acceptable, subject to the imposition of conditions to control specific aspects of design in the scheme of conversion and adaptation.

**8.00 CONCLUSION**

8.01 In conclusion it is considered that the proposals will not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of this listed building. Detailed discussions and negotiations have taken place with the applicant's agent in progression of this application to ensure that any development retains and enhances the buildings special architectural and historic character. I therefore recommend accordingly.

8.02 In considering this planning application the Council has acted in accordance with the Human Rights Act 1998 including Article 8 of the Convention and in a manner which is necessary in a democratic society in furtherance of the legitimate aims of the Act and the Convention.

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