

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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

DATE: **14TH MAY 2014**

REPORT BY: **HEAD OF PLANNING**

SUBJECT: **RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF 47NO. UNITS INCLUDING PART DEMOLITION OF EXISTING MODERN BUILDINGS, CONVERSION OF RETAINED MODERN BUILDINGS INTO 8NO. THREE BEDROOM TOWN HOUSES, CONVERSION OF LISTED BUILDINGS INTO 1NO. FOUR BEDROOM DETACHED HOUSE (CHAPEL) AND 26NO. APARTMENTS (8NO. ONE BED AND 18NO. TWO BED) AND ERECTION OF 12NO. THREE BEDROOM TERRACED HOUSES AT LLUESTY HOSPITAL, OLD CHESTER ROAD, HOLYWELL**

APPLICATION NUMBER: **051727 & 051728**

APPLICANT: **KEHAR BUILDERS LTD**

SITE: **LLUESTY HOSPITAL, OLD CHESTER ROAD, HOLYWELL**

APPLICATION VALID DATE: **12.02.14**

LOCAL MEMBERS: **COUNCILLOR G ROBERTS**

TOWN/COMMUNITY COUNCIL: **HOLYWELL**

REASON FOR COMMITTEE: **SCALE OF DEVELOPMENT**

SITE VISIT: **NO**

1.00 SUMMARY

- 1.01 This is a full planning application (051727) and Listed Building Consent (051728) for residential development of 47no. units including part demolition of existing modern buildings, conversion of retained modern buildings into 8no. three bedroom town houses, conversion of listed buildings into 1no. four bedroom detached house (chapel) and

26no. apartments (8no. one bed and 18no. two bed) and erection of 12no. three bedroom terraced houses. It is considered the proposed scheme provides a sympathetic scheme of conversion and new build which complement each other to restore and ensure the future reuse of a Grade II Listed Building.

2.00 RECOMMENDATION: TO GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION AND LISTED BUILDING CONSENT, SUBJECT TO REFERRAL TO CADW. ANY PLANNING PERMISSION AND LISTED BUILDING CONSENT SHOULD INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:-

- 2.01
1. Time commencement
 2. In accordance with plans
 3. Archaeological watching brief for early stages
 4. Photographic record of the site
 5. Details for the footway and junction works
 6. Completion of above works prior to occupation
 7. Details of siting, layout and design of the means of access
 8. Visibility splay of 2.4x43m
 9. Visibility splays to be kept free of obstruction
 10. Access gates shall open inwards only and positioned a minimum distance of 5.m from the edge of the carriageway
 11. Site investigation prior to commencement of new build
 12. Bat mitigation full details for licence
 13. Replacement nesting places for house martins and swifts
 14. New build – Code 3 for sustainable homes
 15. Tree protection measures during construction and construction of hardsurfaces around trees to be in accordance with Tree Survey
 16. Surface water drainage
 17. Detailed scheme for play area on site
 18. Details of usage of land to the north for informal recreation to south east
 19. Pointing specification
 20. Windows, rooflights details and samples
 21. Materials including glazing
 22. Hard and soft landscaping details and implementation
 23. Railings and gates
 24. Cycle rack details
 25. Sections

3.00 CONSULTATIONS

3.01 Local Member

Councillor G Roberts

Preliminary view is the proposed development acceptable in principle.

Holywell Town Council

No objection.

Head of Assets and Transportation

No objection subject to the imposition of conditions covering:

- Details for the footway and junction works and completion prior to occupation
- Details of siting, layout and design of the means of access
- Visibility splay of 2.4x43m and to be kept free of obstruction
- Access gates shall open inwards only and positioned a minimum distance of 5.m from the edge of the carriageway

Head of Public Protection

No objections in principle to this application, however, the site has an extensive historical use as a Work House and Hospital and there was also a gas works on site and there could also be asbestos present in the building fabric. In addition the site is in an area which includes an extensive lead mining history, therefore, there is considerable justification to believe that contamination could be present in all or part of the site. Additionally the proposed development which includes residential accommodation could be particularly vulnerable to the presence of contamination. No objections subject to the imposition of a conditions requiring a site investigation prior to the commencement of development of the new build.

Head of Streetscene

There is adequate space for the safe collections of waste from the site.

Head of Lifelong Learning

At present there are 96 children on roll at Perth y Terfyn Infants School, which has a capacity of 110 (10.9% surplus) and 143 at Ysgol y Fron with 26% surplus places. Holywell High School has 525 pupils on roll with a capacity of 1075 (48% surplus).

The Head of Lifelong Learning considered that the generation of the Primary age pupils together with a total of 19 pupils expected from other developments in the area will eliminate the surplus places at Perth y Terfyn Infants school and a contribution is therefore required of £110,313 to meet this shortage of places. A contribution to the Junior and Secondary School is not required due to the surplus of places.

Head of Leisure Services

No response received at time of writing.

Welsh Water/Dwr Cymru

No response received at time of writing.

Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust

Two prior archaeological reports on the cultural heritage aspects of

this former workhouse have been produced (2008 and 2013) which effectively provide a history of the surviving buildings and the equivalent of a Level 2 English Heritage Buildings Survey (specification from EH - Understanding Historic Buildings 2006). The proposed development appears to be entirely sympathetic to the fabric, plan and external elevations of the original listed workhouse buildings. Internally the buildings have been heavily modernised and very little of architectural merit or historical value survives. No further archaeological work would be recommended here with regard to the surviving listed buildings.

There is also some potential highlighted in the 2013 report for sub-surface remains of later Victorian extensions to the main 1840 cruciform plan, which have since been demolished. Should these foundations be revealed by the landscaping and creation of parking areas then they should be fully recorded.

Recommend a watching brief condition to allow monitoring and recording during the early stages of development.

Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales

The proposals to convert the former listed hospital and listed chapel are in principle to be welcomed. Given the interest and complexity of the site it is reasonable to require as a condition of the consent that a photographic record of the site is made before development for deposit in the National Monuments Record of Wales.

Ancient Monuments Society

No work should begin on the new build until the conversion of the Listed building is well advanced. Would question the use of plain glazing in the chapel conversion as it is highly likely that John Douglas would have used diagonal quarries contained by lead cames, although as the windows are boarded up it is unclear if they are present. If they are they should be retained.

The Georgian Group

No response received at time of writing.

Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings

No response received at time of writing.

The Victorian Society

No response received at time of writing.

4.00 PUBLICITY

4.01 Press Notice, Site Notice, Neighbour Notification

1 objection received on the grounds of;

- All developments in Holywell would have an impact on the amount of traffic that comes through Halkyn which has hardly

any paths

- Concern over access to the site. Where will the access be and how will it incorporate access with least disruption to Old Chester Road.
- Potential contamination to surrounding homes during development

1 letter of support but raises the issue that the proposal will lead to increased traffic on Old Chester Road and may cause accidents especially in icy weather. Old Chester Road is used as a short cut by some people and traffic calming may help.

1 letter in support on the grounds that;

- Current state of disrepair is unattractive for people entering Holywell and has led to the use of the site for anti-social behaviour
- Site should be put to a beneficial reuse
- Will provide employment for local tradesman

1 enquiry on whether there were plans to develop or maintain the land to the south of the site.

1 enquiry as to whether the buildings are listed as they are very old and have a lot of history to the town.

5.00 SITE HISTORY

5.01 045131 Residential development (69 no. units) comprising the conversion of historic buildings (38 no. units) and the erection of new-build dwellings (31 no. units). File closed 20.11.13

045133 LISTED BUILDING APPLICATION - Residential development (69 no. units) comprising the conversion of historic buildings (38 no. units) and the erection of new-build dwellings (31 no. units) File closed 20.11.13

6.00 PLANNING POLICIES

6.01 Flintshire Unitary Development Plan

STR1 - New Development

STR4 - Housing

STR8 - Built Environment

GEN1 - General Requirements for New Development

GEN2 - Development Inside Settlement Boundaries

D1 - Design Quality, Location and Layout

D2 - Design

D3 - Landscaping

TWH1 - Development Affecting Trees and Woodlands

WB1 - Species Protection

HE2 - Development Affecting Listed Buildings and their Settings

AC13 - Access and Traffic Impact
AC18 - Parking Provision and New Development
HSG1 - New Housing Development Proposals
HSG8 - Density of Development
HSG9 - Housing Mix and Type
HSG10 - Affordable Housing within Settlement Boundaries
SR5 - Outdoor Play Space and New Residential Development
EWP3 - Renewable Energy in New Development

The proposal accords with the above policies.

7.00 PLANNING APPRAISAL

7.01 Introduction

This is a full planning application (051727) and Listed Building Consent (051728) for residential development of 47no. units including part demolition of existing modern buildings, conversion of retained modern buildings into 8no. three bedroom town houses, conversion of listed buildings into 1no. four bedroom detached house (chapel) and 26no. apartments (8no. one bed and 18no. two bed) and erection of 12no. three bedroom terraced houses.

7.02 Site Description

Lluesty Hospital is situated to the west of Holywell town centre and is elevated above the town. It was built as a workhouse and used more recently a community hospital. The workhouse itself and the adjacent chapel and entrance buildings are Grade 2 Listed. There are a number of more modern buildings in the grounds. The site also contains the former Infirmary building which is not part of the application site and in separate ownership. The site has been vacant since the hospital closed and has fallen into disrepair prior to purchase by the current owner. The site has sloping topography and is therefore a prominent site in terms of the setting of the town of Holywell.

7.03 The site is located to the west of Old Chester Road and is situated in a predominately residential area with Llys Emlyn Williams and the entrance to a residential development opposite the site. To the north is a further residential development with open land sloping upwards to the south west. To the east is the Old Infirmary building and beyond that a further residential development known as the Beeches. There is a petrol filling station on the other side of Old Chester Road and The Stamford Gate Public House off Halkyn Road to the east. The site is accessed from the south from the A5026 Halkyn Road off Old Chester Road. There is also a secondary access to the north of the site behind the former chapel off a minor road which leads to the B5121.

Proposed Development

7.04 This is a full planning application for residential use of the Lluesty Hospital site. The scheme involves a mixture of conversion of the

existing buildings and new build creating a mix of property types. It is proposed to convert the workhouse building into 23 apartments; 7 one bedroom and 16 two bedroom. The two buildings on the site frontage would be converted to 1 one bedroom and 2 two bedroom apartments. The majority of the apartments are split over 1 and 2 levels. The 1960's ward block would be converted to 8 three bedroom townhouses. These each have private amenity space to the rear. There are 12 new build three bedroom houses on land to the south west of the existing complex of buildings. These are 2 storey on the southern elevation and 3 storey on the northern elevation to take advantage of the sloping nature of the site. They would use a mixture of stone, render and glazing to complement the other buildings on sit. The former chapel would be converted to a four bedroom dwelling. The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement, Heritage Assessment, Methodology of development works, Landscape Strategy, Ecological Survey, Tree Survey and a Bat Survey.

7.05 Access into the site would be via a one way system with an entrance off Old Chester Road at the western extent of the site and the exit from an existing access between two existing buildings. 6 units would be accessed off the existing Brynford Road access; 5 apartments and the chapel. The entrance to the site would have security gates and railings designed to an agreed specification to respect the Listed Building. New paths and footways are to be provided within the site. Bin stores and cycle stores are proposed in appropriate locations for each element of the residential scheme. Due to the location of the site within proximity of Holywell town centre one cycle rack has been provided for each bedroom on the site. The roads and footways on the site are to be privately maintained through a management company for the site as a whole. The existing pavement on Old Chester Road is to be extended to provide safe pedestrian refuge. 83 parking spaces are provided within the site for the proposed residential units in the form of driveways and parking courts.

7.06 The proposed scheme would utilise the existing foul drainage which was used for the site's previous use. Surface water drainage will also utilise the existing system although site investigations have been undertaken for the use of soakaways on the site.

<p>PHASE 1. Protect Listed Buildings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - repairs to listed buildings (Workhouse, Chapel and Cottages.) - structural repairs where necessary - replace / repair roof - replace all leadwork - replace all rainwater goods - repair, clean and repoint all stonework - refurbish / renew all windows and external doors - demolish lift shaft and make good
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demolish tanks and remove from site - demolish surplus buildings
PHASE 2. Site Enabling Works.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - infrastructure for roads - infrastructure for utilities - gas, electric, water, phones - prepare site for drainage
PHASE 3. Create 8no. Townhouses. (Ex. Ward block)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enabling works to separate ward block from workhouse - convert ward block into 8 townhouses - landscape site - construct pavement and associated works on Old Chester road. - fit railings, electric gates and fencing to whole site. - construct play area - market 8 town houses
PHASE 4. Fit out Listed Buildings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal works to convert Workhouse, Cottages and Chapel into apartments. - Market listed building apartments
PHASE 5. New Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Build 12 no. Semi-detached houses on the hill - including Landscaping and all Hard standings.

Issues

7.07 Principle of Development

The application site is allocated within the Flintshire Unitary Development Plan for residential development. The Council produced a Development and Conservation Brief for the site in 2006 to support the UDP residential allocation under policy HSG1. This set out which buildings the Council wanted to retain and which would be supported for demolition along with identifying areas for new development. The site as a whole is allocated for 70 dwellings within policy HSG1 of the UDP. It is considered the proposed scheme concurs with the strategic aims the Council has for this site, respecting the character of the Listed Building while providing a new use in accordance with its residential allocation.

7.08 Impact on the historic environment

The historic buildings on the site vary in age and comprise; the former workhouse, which is a cruciform building of classical proportions completed in 1840 by John Welch; a chapel in the Gothic style by John Douglas of Chester completed in 1884 and a nursing home extension in a classical style with interior elements of art nouveau completed in 1902. There are two stone faced buildings dating from the mid Victorian period of a domestic scale on the north eastern frontage of the site facing Old Chester Road. During the 20th century a number of functional brick and concrete buildings and extensions

were added to serve the hospital use of the site.

- 7.09 A Heritage Statement has been submitted with the application which describes the character of the buildings and their attributes along with the impacts of the proposal on them. The workhouse and the chapel were Grade II Listed by CADW in 1991 as “an especially good Classical example of a former workhouse building”. It has the standard workhouse grid plan with separate courtyards for men and women with a linking central octagon. There may have been alterations in 1869 and it was enlarged to the right in 1902 with modern extensions during its hospital use.
- 7.10 It is proposed to demolish a number of the buildings and modern extensions. These are of little architectural merit and will assist in exposing parts of the Listed Buildings. The demolitions are therefore deemed to be acceptable. The proposed redevelopment aims to conserve historic features of the buildings and sympathetically replace missing features. Internally the building has been extensively modernised with internal partitioning and no significant features of historic or architectural significance remain. The internal layout aims to maintain the original character with the recording and preservation of any features of historic interest.
- 7.11 The proposed scheme aims to convert the buildings to a residential use to ensure the preservation of the buildings as heritage assets, without significantly affecting the exterior and preserving the workhouse’s appearance. This is to be achieved by maintaining the historic quadrant, retaining the front wall and sloping grassed areas, retention of external chimneys and internal staircases and limiting the number of new door openings in the external fabric, closure of existing door openings creation of new window openings and closure of existing window openings. The open spaces in the quadrant areas will be resurfaced with the introduction of new formal planting along with discrete parking areas.
- 7.12 The scheme for the conversion of the chapel proposed to convert it into a single dwelling house as this has the least intrusion in terms of the historic fabric of the building. In order to have a first floor there is the need to insert rooflights in the existing roof and the existing modern windows will be replaced to match the originals.
- 7.13 A condition survey of the windows in the Listed Buildings has been undertaken which each of the 280 windows being surveyed and documented. Where possible the original windows will be refurbished and rebuilt. In other cases new windows will be made to match the existing. A Methodology for the Development Works has been submitted which sets out how it is proposed to deal with the roof tiles, lead and rainwater goods, along with details for repair of the stone work and masonry and the elements of demolition.

- 7.14 The workhouse building is an imposing structure and is three and four storey in places. Behind the workhouse the site slopes upwards with a significant change in levels. The retention of the ward block and its reuse assists in providing a transition between the different areas of the site and the new build properties on the elevated ground.
- 7.15 Highways
The site would have historically had significant traffic generation associated with its use as a hospital. Due to the presence of Listed Buildings on the site and the desire to retain them this has implications for what can be achieved in terms of the internal road layout and any external highway improvements. Due to the topography of the site and the location of the buildings the proposed layout of the internal access roads does not conform to the requirements for adoptable public highway, therefore these would remain in private ownership.
- 7.16 It is proposed to provide a new length of footway along the frontage between blocks A and E and to change the roundabout junction at the entrance to Yr Aber to a T junction. Provision of the footway will enable the existing road junction (adjacent to block A) to be modified resulting in significant improvements to visibility. This can be provided through a 278 agreement.
- 7.17 The existing wall fronting the site severely restricts the visibility of drivers existing the main access. It is therefore proposed to use this as an entrance only, with the exit via an existing access located between Blocks E and D. Visibility from this exit is restricted but can be improved to an appropriate 2.4 x 43m. It is proposed to improve visibility from the existing access point (adjacent to Block A) by setting back the wall which achieves a visibility splay of 2.4 x 43m. There is no objection to the use of Brynford Road for the limited number of units.
- 7.18 Impact on the natural environment
A Phase 1 Ecological Survey has been undertaken. The area immediately around the buildings is hardstanding with some areas of amenity grass and borders with shrubs. The site is bounded by a line of mature trees, bushes and vegetation from the south eastern corner around the southern boundary and along the western edge of the site to its north west corner. A number of mammal pathways were observed during the site survey. There was no conclusive evidence of badgers on the site. The site proposed for the new build development is generally of moderate ecological value. The retention and protection of the mature and semi-mature trees and enhancement of the hedgerows as key boundary features are important in terms of maintaining connective features of the site and screening of the development.
- 7.19 A bat survey was undertaken in August 2013. The report confirms

the presence of bats within buildings on the site. No outstanding habitats present but the report considers that they may provide foraging areas for bats and be important for flight lines. The emergence surveys one dusk and one dawn, concentrated on the northern section of the site which confirmed the presence of small roosts of Pipistrelle and Brown Long Eared Bats. In addition a single Lesser Horseshoe bat was picked up within the loft space within a building. As the loft space of the workhouse is not being converted, this will form the basis of the mitigation strategy.

- 7.20 Bats are a European Protected Species under the Conservation and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended). European protected animal species and their breeding sites or resting places are protected. It is an offence to damage or destroy a breeding or resting place of such an animal. A licence will be required to undertaken the development works and to provide the mitigation. The there tests under the regulations need to be demonstrated before a licence is granted.
- 7.21 (1) **Regulation 53(2)(e)** states: a licence can be granted for the purposes of “preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment”. In this case the development works are for the preservation of a Listed Building which will also involve making the building safe in terms of public safety and preserving it for future generations in the public interest. There will also be social and economic benefits in terms of construction jobs created and the creation of a variety of housing types.
- 7.22 (2) **Regulation 53(9)(a)** states: the appropriate authority shall not grant a licence unless they are satisfied “that there is no satisfactory alternative”. The application site is a residential allocation within the Unitary Development Plan. Alternatives to providing residential development within Holywell have been considered through the development plan process in allocation the site. There is also the requirement under other legislation to protect Listed Buildings and works are required to the building to prevent further deterioration.
- 7.23 (3) **Regulation 53(9)(b)** states: the appropriate authority shall not grant a licence unless they are satisfied “that the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.” The Listed Building is deteriorating due to vandalism and exposure to the elements. The suitability of the building as a resting place for bats is therefore also declining. The restoration of the building and mitigation in the form of retention and repair to the roof space will provide a betterment and therefore improve the favourable conservation status of the bat

species using the site.

7.24 A Tree Survey was undertaken in September 2013 in accordance with BS5837. None of the trees on site are covered by a Tree Preservation Order. The tree cover on the site is principally peripheral. This assessed the condition of the trees on the site and whether they were worthy of retention or required removal. The report recommends tree protection measures are undertaken to avoid damage to the retained trees during construction. These can be conditioned. A landscaping scheme has been drawn up for the whole site.

7.25 S106 contributions

Prior to the submission of the application the applicants submitted a financial assessment which was assessed by the District Valuer in December 2013. This included a breakdown of construction costs, purchase price of the site and estimated sales values of the properties to determine the profit to be made. The District Valuer concluded any financial contributions towards S106 requirements would not make the scheme viable. In his opinion he considered the scheme was not viable without such payments due to the current market conditions.

7.26 Open space

Local Planning Guidance Note 13 requires developments for 25 dwellings or more to provide the minimum of 56.65 square metres of open space per dwelling. In this instance due to the nature of the site and the limited amount of open land this is not achievable. The developer has offered to put forward the sloping land to the south east of the development site as use for residents for informal recreation. This is suitable for dog walking and free play but not for any formal sports. Provision will also be made on site for a small formal play area for young children. It is considered that this provides adequate play provision and recreation opportunities for site residents.

7.27 Affordable housing

The Council's starting point for affordable housing in accordance with policy HSG10 for allocated sites within settlement boundaries. This site raises different issues to 'normal' Greenfield development sites. A significant portion of this site is the conversion of Listed Buildings which has higher cost implications in terms of the work necessary and the level of detail involved. The new build development therefore assists in funding these elements. Any provision of affordable housing is deemed to be un-viable by the developer and the District Valuer. However it is considered that as the development would provide a mix of housing types with a significant number of one and two bedroom apartments, by virtue of the housing market in this area these would be affordable by nature. It is therefore considered that in order to achieve a scheme for the restoration of the Listed Building in the current economic climate and following the District Valuer's

conclusions it would not be viable to request any affordable housing commuted sum.

7.28 Education contribution

The Head of Lifelong Learning has estimated that the development would generate 9 primary age pupils and 7 secondary age pupils. At present there are 96 on roll at Perth y Terfyn Infants School, which has a capacity of 110 (10.9% surplus) and 143 at Ysgol y Fron with a 26% surplus. Holywell High School has 525 pupils on roll with a capacity of 1075 (48% surplus).

7.29 The Head of Lifelong Learning considered that the generation of the Primary age pupils together with a total of 19 pupils expected from other developments in the area will eliminate the surplus places at Perth y Terfyn Infants school and a contribution is therefore required of £110,313 to meet this shortage of places. A contribution to the Junior and Secondary School is not required due to the surplus of places.

7.30 Members will be aware of the Council's proposals for the new Holywell School project (051719) which encompasses infant, junior and secondary school provision in one new purpose built building. This scheme is due to start construction on site in September 2014 with its opening scheduled for September 2016. This makes provision for 315 Primary school places (infants and juniors) and 600 Secondary School places. It is therefore not considered that it is reasonable to ask for a contribution towards education provision in this instance as Perth y Terfyn has more than 5% surplus places at present and by the time this development is ready for occupation there will be adequate provision of places in the new school.

8.00 CONCLUSION

8.01 It is considered the proposed scheme provides a sympathetic scheme of conversion and new build which complement each other to restore and ensure the future reuse of a Grade II Listed Building in accordance with the UDP policies and the development brief for the site.

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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