Application Ref: NP/13/0031

Application Type Listed Building

Grid Ref: **Applicant** SN13840036 Mr P Prosser

Agent

Proposal

Amend existing and install new safety railings. Reopen

windows to former generator house, fit timber door and

raise doorway lintel

Site Location

St Catherines Island, Castle Beach, Tenby,

Pembrokeshire, SA70 7BP

Case Officer

Rob Scourfield

Delegated Status

This application does not fall within the provisions of the Listed Building Delegation Direction awarded to this Authority by the Welsh Government on 25th July 2012, as St Catherine's Fort is listed Grade II*.

This application is before Members at the discretion of the Head of Development Management due to the nature of this and related proposals..

Summary

This application for listed building consent is separate to an application for planning consent for the redevelopment and change of use of the island and fort to a visitor attraction (NP/13/0071). The application for listed building consent under the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) may be legitimately considered in advance of the planning application, the latter not being validated until 15th February 2013 (and therefore not allowing both applications to be processed in parallel). The scope of the listed building application concerns only the refurbishment of a small detached outbuilding (former generator house) and the provision of new safety railings.

St Catherine's Island is located just south-east of Tenby, linked by the Castle Sands. St Catherine's Fort, a Grade II* listed Building and scheduled ancient monument is located on the eastern side of the island. To the west (outside of the scheduled area) lie the former generator house and railings (alongside pathways) which are listed by virtue of lying within the historic curtilage of the listed fort. The island lies within the Conservation Area and is surrounded by a marine Special Area of Conservation and a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

This application concerns the former generator house and railings only. Where buildings are both listed and scheduled - as in the case of the fort the legislation pertaining to scheduling takes priority and listed building control does not apply. Any works to the scheduled ancient monument will require scheduled ancient monument consent from Cadw and redevelopment of the island and fort as a whole requires planning permission, which has been

submitted under NP/13/0071 and which will be the subject of a future report to the Development Management Committee.

The proposal is to amend the existing and install new safety railings to the pathways/steps (including the provision of low-level lighting), reopen the windows to the former generator house, fit a timber door and raise the doorway lintel.

The proposed scheme is considered to be in keeping with the character of the listed buildings, and their setting, and as such, the application is recommended for approval.

Consultee Response

Tenby Town Council: Supporting **Tenby Civic Society**: Supporting

Tenby Conservation Forum: No Response Received - at the time of this

report.

Dyfed Archaeological Trust: No Response Received - at the time of this report.

Ecologist - Pembrokeshire County Council: No adverse comments - Survey work is required to assess the potential impact on the Favourable Conservation Status of the local bat population. An updated survey was received on 18th March 2013 which provides sufficient information to determine the application with the confidence that there will be no adverse impact on protected species

Public Response

The application has been appropriately advertised. Six letters of objection have been received at the time of this report; any subsequent responses will be reported verbally to Members.

The objections raise the following points;-

- The proposal cannot be judged in isolation of the overall plan to redevelop the fort as a tourist attraction.
- Use of the island as a tourist attraction has potential impact on the character of Tenby with particular concerns regarding a bridge access, boat loading platform, crane, traffic congestion, noise and disturbance to the amenity of surrounding properties.
- The potential impact on the biodiversity of the island and environs

Officer's Appraisal

The application is entirely separate to the proposal to redevelop the island as a tourist attraction or to restore the scheduled fort and as such, may be determined in isolation (under the provisions of the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, being concerned with proposed alterations and refurbishment of the listed railings and former generator house. In terms of the potential impact on biodiversity, the County Council's Ecologist has confirmed that adequate survey work has been undertaken by the applicant in the context of the proposed works to the generator house and railings. The impact of the proposed redevelopment of the island and fort on biodiversity will be subject to consideration as part the application for planning consent (NP/13/0071)

Policies Considered

As this application is for listed building consent, section 16 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest. There is, therefore, no statutory requirement to determine the application in accordance with the policies of the development plan.

Welsh Office Circular 61/96 (Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas) is a material consideration, with guidance provided by Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment of Wales (Cadw, 2011).

Background & Description

St Catherine's Island takes its name from a small chapel, which existed there in medieval times. The fort was built in 1867-70 as part of the fortification of England and Wales against Napoleonic threat, in this case as an outlying defence of the Milford Haven and the Royal Dockyard at Pembroke Dock. The fort was decommissioned in 1906 and converted to a dwelling in 1914. It was in military use again during the Second World War and sold off in 1959. Its final use was as a zoo between 1968-79. The fort was listed a Grade II* in 1953, and scheduled as a Ancient Monument in 1991.

The former generator house, which is the subject of this application, is of uncertain date, perhaps c.1914. It lies on the west side of the island and is a small stone-built single-storey structure, altered during the Second World War when it became an ammunition magazine, serving the anti-aircraft gun emplacement alongside. The alterations included the addition of the flat concrete roof and the blocking of the windows.

The railings, which are also the subject of this application, also probably date from c. 1914. They comprise simple cast-iron stanchions, which were made at the local Woodside Foundry at Wisemans Bridge. The stanchions support pipe-rails, now mostly replaced. Some areas of railings are missing/have been

replaced or are badly decayed. The railings lie alongside the rock-cut steps and paths leading from the beach to the fort.

Relevant Planning History

NP/12/0396 and NP/12/0397. Planning and listed building applications for change of use, replace/repair railings, install two cranes and two boat landings etc - cancelled 11/12/2012.

Current Proposal

The proposal includes:-

- 1. The repair of the former generator house, including the unblocking of the windows and insertion of traditional timber casement windows within the existing openings. It is also proposed to raise the door lintel and provide a new timber frame and door with a glazed panel. On the north side of the building, a lower flat-roofed storage building is to be added.
- 2. Amendment of existing and installation of new safety railings. This includes the retention of sound stanchions and their reuse within a new set of railings which are required for health and safety reasons within the hazardous environment. The new railings are of simple steel construction (of closely-spaced vertical rail design), incorporating the old stanchions (which do not conform to current regulations) as decorative features. It is proposed to incorporate low-level lighting within the new railings, set around 300mm above ground level.

The proposal is considered acceptable in terms of preserving the architectural and historic character of the property, under the provisions of Circular 61/96 (Planning and the Historic Environment: Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas).

In terms of Cadw's Conservation Principles:-

- 1. Evidential value. The former generator house was adapted as an ammunition magazine during World War Two, which adds to its historic character. The reversal of the blocked windows and reinstatement of a timber door are considered acceptable alterations, the retention of the concrete flat roof being clear evidence of the later work. The cast iron stanchions, where sound, are to be incorporated within the new lengths of rails for 'posterity'.
- 2. Historical value. No features of historic/architectural importance are affected by the proposal, except for the loss of some cast iron stanchions which are beyond repair.
- 3. Aesthetic value. The aesthetic appearance of the building will be improved through the reinstatement of the glazing and the provision of a traditional door.

4. Communal value. The existing communal value as an ancillary building altered for later military use is not affected by the proposal.

Conclusion

The proposal is considered to be appropriate in terms of size, scale and detail. It is considered to comply with the requirements of Circular 61/96, and Cadw's Conservation Principles. As such, the application can be supported subject to conditions.

Recommendation

That the application be recommended to Cadw for listed building consent subject to conditions relating to time implementation, compliance with the plan and requiring infill details of the stanchions to be retained to be approved.







