

ADDENDUM REPORT

Planning Committee



Item Number: 07

Site: Drake's Island

Planning Application Number: 14/00001/FUL

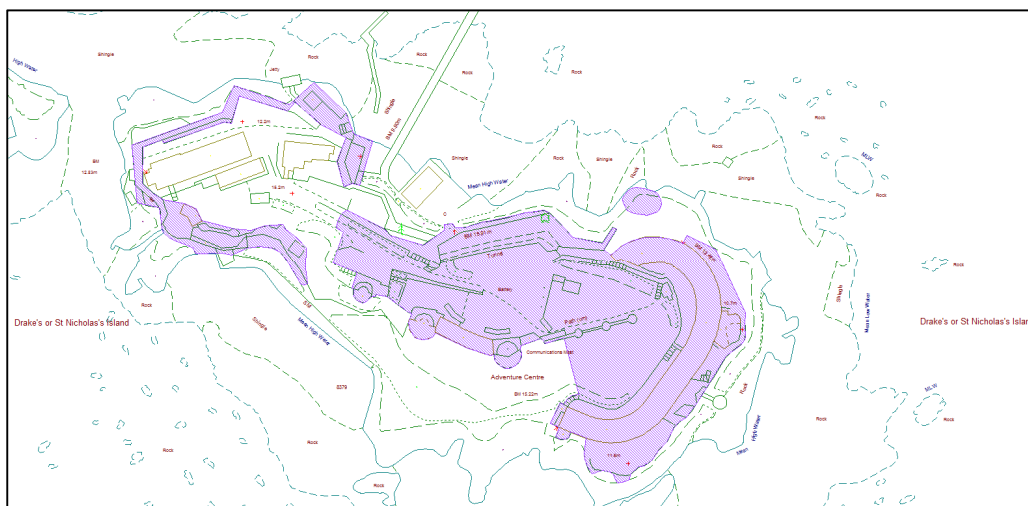
Applicant: Rotolok (Holdings) Ltd

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Site Description

It is considered helpful to include, within the Site Description section of the report, illustrations as follows showing the designation of heritage assets on the island, as this is important to the proper application of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) policies.

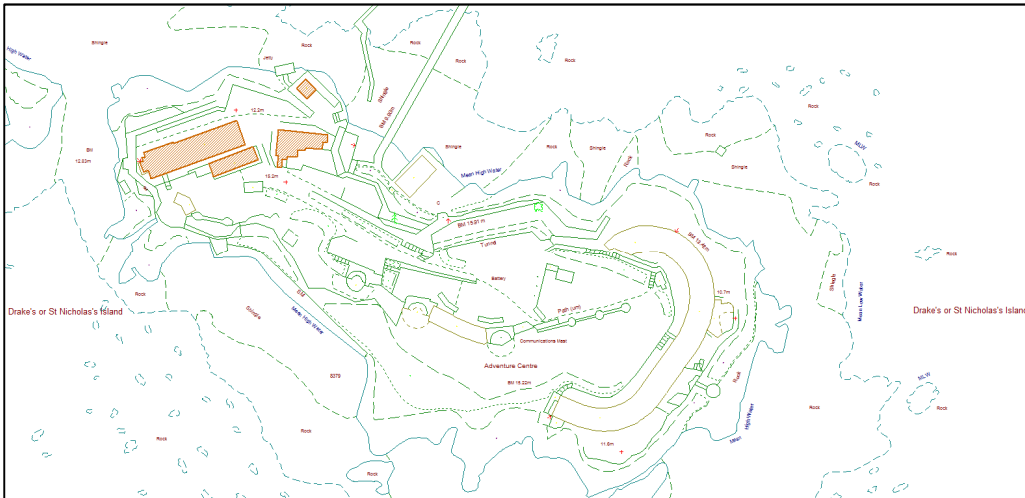
Figure 1: Scheduled Ancient Monuments on Drake's Island



The shaded areas in Figure 1 shows the extent of the three Scheduled Ancient Monuments on Drake's Island. The summary description of these areas is as follows:

“The Coastal Fortifications of Drake's Island - Drake's Island stands as an imposing rock outcrop in the entrance to Plymouth Sound, and incorporates numerous defensive structures dating from the early post medieval period to the 20th century. The island covers 2.6ha, most of which is covered by military monuments, the earliest of which date from 1549. By 1590 there were 23 guns on the island, and it was held for Parliament during the Civil War, and was used for defence purposes until 1958. The monument includes 3 separate protected areas (for the full description, please see the SAM file)”.

Figure 2: Listed Buildings on Drake's Island



The shaded areas in Figure 2 shows the four listed buildings on Drake's Island. These are, clockwise from top;

- i. The Guard House (Grade II listed - early C19 with later C19 alterations – small rectangular building in slate and Plymouth limestone rubble with granite quoins, and brick arches and a slate hipped roof),
- ii. Officer's House (Grade II listed - late C18, extended c1830s – slate, limestone and granite building with a slate roof),
- iii. Ablution Block (Grade II listed - c1830-35 - rectangular Plymouth limestone building with slate roof), and
- iv. Barracks Building (Grade II listed - c1830-35, or possibly of C18 origin, remodelled c1860 - rendered stone and granite elevations under a slate roof).

Analysis

It is proposed to clarify the following in Section 3.0 of the Analysis part of the report:

- It must be noted that the Council's responsibility as Local Planning Authority, to the historic environment on Drake's Island, extends only to the Listed Buildings and not the Scheduled Ancient Monument (for which Historic England is the authorising body) although the effects on the Scheduled Ancient Monument are material considerations to be taken into account in the determination of this application.
- The statutory provision principally relevant to the heritage issues in the determination of this application is section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ("the Listed Buildings Act"). Section 66(1) provides that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. The effect of section 66(1) of the Listed Buildings Act is that there is a statutory presumption in favour of the preservation Listed Buildings and their settings. Considerable importance and weight should be attached to their preservation. A proposal

which would cause harm should only be permitted where there are strong countervailing planning considerations which are sufficiently powerful to outweigh the presumption. The NPPF provides guidance on the weight that should be accorded to such harm and in what circumstances such harm might be justified. Officers consider that all of the harms fall into the “less than substantial” category and most are at the lower end of the “less than substantial harm” category.

- Refurbishment of the jetty and the proposed Arrival Building are considered to have a minimal effect on the island’s historic assets and will significantly improve the existing arrangements. The Arrival Building’s bold angular design and associated landscaping measures are welcomed, as are the proposals for the gateway approach to the main hotel area. Assessed overall, these elements of the development would have a neutral effect on the significance of the heritage assets.
- With regards to the main hotel complex proposed for the Barrack Block/Officer’s House/Ablutions Block, there are two key issues - the loss of original historic fabric and the proposal to connect the buildings to form one hotel “core”. The proposal requires a significant amount of demolition of existing features and fabric, though the most significant elements to be removed are the three stairways on the southern side of the main Barrack Block. This would result in less than substantial harm and, within that category only moderate harm in the middle of the range. While this is regrettable, this building is only assessed as “moderate” in the Heritage Assessment and the loss is justified in both the Heritage Impact Assessment and accepted by Historic England as necessary for the viability of the development. It is therefore considered that any loss here, and with the Artillery Store, is significantly outweighed by the benefits of the proposed development and can be mitigated by recording.
- The proposal to connect the buildings with a central glazed “core” is considered to be a sound approach. The front of the glazed “link block” has been pulled back into alignment with the north frontage of the Island House – responding to Historic England’s request with the previous scheme (planning applications 12/00095/FUL and 12/00099/LBC), and allowing the building’s historic elevation to be seen in full. The proposal would result in no harm to the heritage assets.

Conclusion

It is proposed to clarify in the Conclusion part of the report that the list of potential benefits generated by the proposal is considerable and clearly and significantly outweighs any effect on the heritage assets.

Further Letter of Objection

Members are advised that a further letter has been received objecting to the proposal on the grounds of impacts to European Protected Species.

Further Little Egret Survey Information

Whilst officers have heard anecdotally, via the applicant's ecological consultant, that little egrets have not been present on the island over the summer, this information has not been formally submitted.

Natural England has submitted new little egret bird count information as follows:

"3 dawn surveys:

Saturday 14th Nov 2015 - 37 (but incomplete as arrived slightly late to pick up early leavers)

Sunday 15th Nov 2015 – 47 counted heading towards the Tamar/Mount Edgecombe [sic], then after watching them disappear 4 were picked up at Jennycliffe [sic] so probably 51 total.

Monday 16th Nov 2015 – 51 counted leaving the roost and heading towards Mount Edgecombe [sic] /Tamar direction.

[...]

1 dusk survey:

Sunday 15th Nov 2015 afternoon 15:00 until near dark at 17:00 - 42 Little egrets were counted roosting in the trees on the eastern edge of the island."

Recommendation

No change is proposed to the recommendation in the report.