

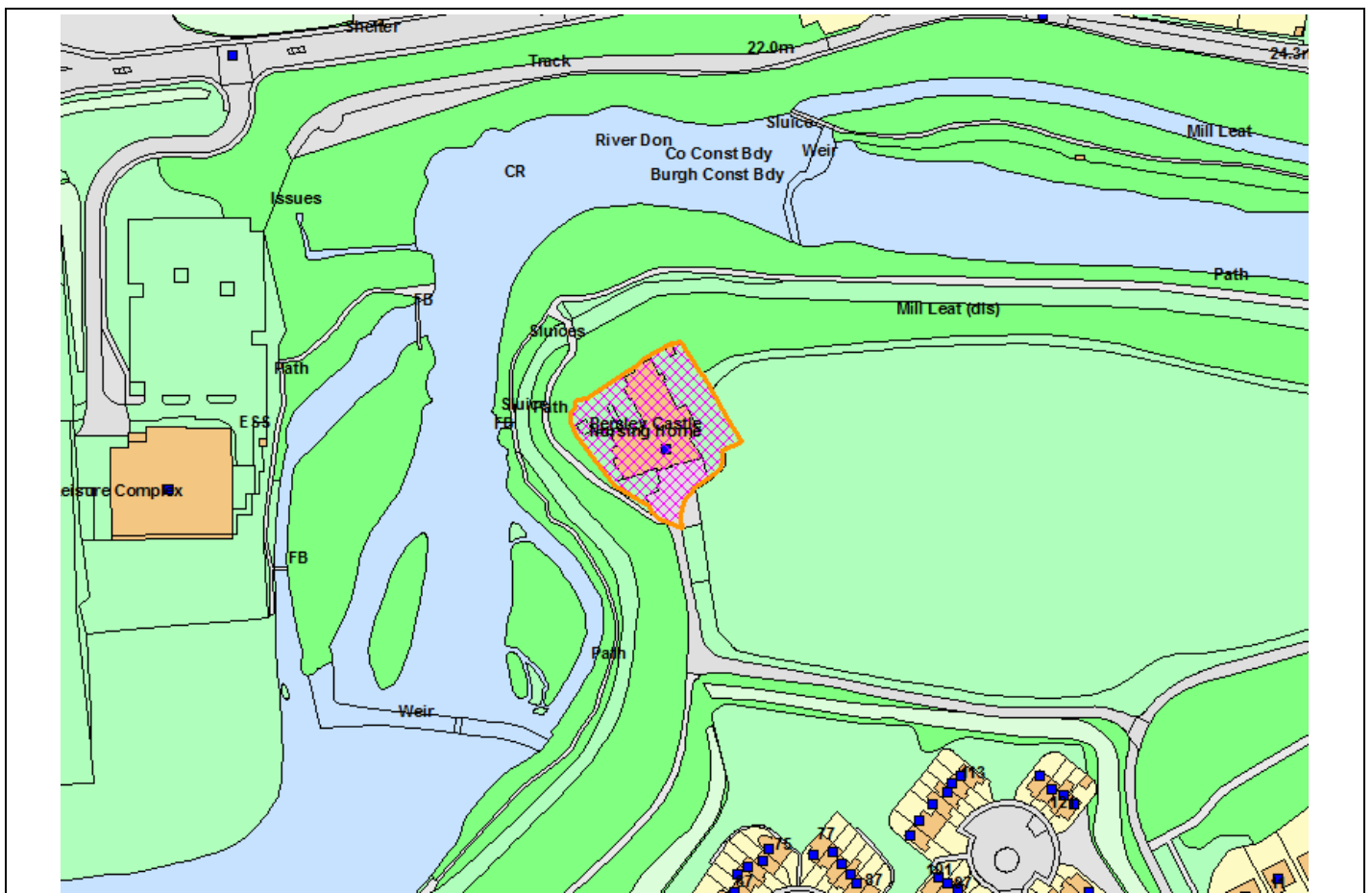


# Planning Development Management Committee

Report by Development Management Manager

**Committee Date: 2 November 2023**

<b>Site Address:</b>	Persley Castle Care Home, Mugiemooss Road, Aberdeen, AB21 9XU
<b>Application Description:</b>	Lowering of sills and installation of windows.
<b>Application Ref:</b>	230351/LBC
<b>Application Type</b>	Listed Building Consent
<b>Application Date:</b>	21 March 2023
<b>Applicant:</b>	Renaissance Care (Scot) Limited
<b>Ward:</b>	Dyce/Bucksburn/Danestone
<b>Community Council:</b>	Woodside And Hilton
<b>Case Officer:</b>	Sam Smith



© Crown Copyright. Aberdeen City Council. Licence Number: 100023401 – 2023

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Approve Unconditionally

## **APPLICATION BACKGROUND**

### **Site Description**

The application relates to a care home occupying a two-storey Category B listed granite property, and associated modern extensions, which dates from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century as a dormitory for Woodside Works. The site sits within the Green Belt and is surrounded by grounds within the Green Space Network. It is accessed via an unadopted driveway off Mugiemoor Road through heavily landscaped grounds, beyond which to the north flows the River Don, and to the south is the 'Hutcheon Low' residential area. The property is currently fitted with multiple white sash and case windows on the ground floor and side hung white casement windows on the ground and first floor. The windows have a curved granite lintel which is cut in to meet the window opening.

### **Relevant Planning History**

170631/DPP - Erection of single storey extension to rear – Approved Unconditionally 28.07.2017

200795/DPP - Erection of single storey extension to rear – Approved Conditionally 17.08.2021

## **APPLICATION DESCRIPTION**

### **Description of Proposal**

Listed building consent is sought for the enlargement of four window openings on the property.

- The two windows on the front elevation would replace the small windows on the first floor of the main section of the building. The window opening would be increased, measuring c. 500mm in width and 2.25m in height. These windows would be timber, side hung casement windows with timber astragals to match the vertical window pane arrangement of the existing window on the south-west bay and incorporate a granite curved lintel and rybat cut into the window to match the existing windows.
- The two south most window openings on the east elevation would be increased, lowering the sill to form windows measuring c. 900mm in width and 2.35m in height (matching the size and form of the existing window on the south-west bay). These windows would be timber, side hung casement windows with timber astragals and a vertical central bar to match the window pane arrangement of the existing window on the south-west bay and extending the granite rybat to match the existing windows.

### **Amendments**

The windows have been reduced in width to create more symmetry on the front elevation and reduce the loss of original wall fabric.

### **Supporting Documents**

All drawings and supporting documents listed below can be viewed on the Council's website at:

<https://publicaccess.aberdeencity.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=RRV51TBZHQV00>

Heritage Statement

Heritage Report – Appendix 1

### **Reason for Referral to Committee**

The application has been referred to the Planning Development Management Committee because Historic Environment Scotland has made observations which cannot competently be addressed through the use of appropriate planning conditions; the Planning Service considers the revised proposal to be acceptable in planning terms, despite advice from Historic Environment Scotland

that the proposal should be resisted. Consequently, the proposal falls out with the Scheme of Delegation.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

**Historic Environment Scotland (HES) –** HES have provided the following comments:

- The proposal would have an adverse impact on the significance of the listed building due to loss of original wall fabric and a change to the fenestration pattern which contributes to the buildings character.
- It was suggested that the size of the enlargement be reduced slightly.
- It was also suggested that the size of the existing window in the southwest bay be restored to its original size to reinstate symmetry with the window on the southeast bay.
- A justification for the works should be provided as part of the application.

**Historic Environment Scotland (HES) re-consultation –** Following amendments dated 15 August 2023, HES have noted the following remaining concerns:

- The reduction in the size of the window enlargement would maintain an adverse impact on the significance on the listed building due to loss of original wall fabric and a change to the fenestration pattern which contributes to the buildings character.
- Based on the justification provided, it is not clear how the viability of the building would be affected by the loss of one or two bedrooms.
- Other options should be explored to review whether there are other rooms in the building that could be converted to form a replacement bedroom.

**Woodside and Hilton Community Council –** No comments received.

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

None

## **MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Legislative Requirements**

Where a proposal affects a listed building, sections 14(2) and 59(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 places a duty on planning authorities in determining an application for Listed Building Consent to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. This is the primary consideration in the determination of applications for Listed Building Consent.

### **Development Plan**

#### **National Planning Framework 4**

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) is the long-term spatial strategy for Scotland and contains a comprehensive set of national planning policies that form part of the statutory development plan. The relevant provisions of NPF4 that require consideration in terms of this application are –

- Policy 7 (Historic Assets and Places)

#### **Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 (ALDP)**

- Policy D6 (Historic Environment)
- Policy D7 (Our Granite Heritage)
- Policy D8 (Windows and Doors)

### **Interim Aberdeen Planning Guidance**

Aberdeen Planning Guidance is Interim Planning Guidance. The documents hold limited weight until they are adopted by the Council. The weight to be given to Interim Planning Guidance prior to its adoption is a matter for the decision maker. The following guidance is relevant –

- The Repair and Replacement of Windows and Doors

### **Other National Policy and Guidance**

- Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (HEPS)
- Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Windows

## **EVALUATION**

### **Principle of Development**

Policy 7 (Historic Assets and Places) of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) states that development proposals for the reuse, alteration or extension of a listed building will only be supported where they will preserve its character, special architectural or historic interest and setting. Policy D6 (Historic Environment) of the ALDP expects development to protect, preserve and enhance the historic environment and requires adverse development impacts to be minimised and for development to maintain the character, appearance and setting of the historic environment and to protect the special architectural or historic interest of listed buildings, conservation areas and historic gardens. The retention and reuse of historic assets would also be supported under this policy. Policy D7 (Our Granite Heritage) of the ALDP seeks the retention and appropriate reuse of all historic granite buildings and only supports the demolition of any granite structure where it is no longer of special interest or its repair or reuse is not viable. Any downtakings from existing granite structures are required to be visibly reused within the development site. Policy D8 (Windows and Doors) of the ALDP expects historic windows to be retained and for any new windows to be designed in line with the guidance set out in the Interim Aberdeen Planning Guidance (APG) for The Repair and Replacement of Windows and Doors.

The proposal seeks to increase the window opening of four windows on the property, including two on the principal elevation of the building. The existing historic windows have been identified in the supporting Heritage Statement as insufficient for allowing a suitable level of light into the bedrooms. The enlargement of these windows has therefore been suitably justified to meet current standards of care for habitable rooms within the care home. The Managing Change guidance and the APG would not support the alteration of window openings on the principal elevation where it would create an unbalanced composition. In this case, the window openings on the front elevation would maintain symmetry on the front elevation, maintaining separation in design between the central aspect of the building and the two adjacent bays through the use of slimline first-floor windows in the narrower, setback section of the front elevation. The interest of the windows on the building has been attributed by HES to the upwardly diminishing fenestration pattern. As the proposed windows would align in width and position with the existing windows on the ground floor, they are considered to be suitably designed and placed to maintain the architectural interest of the listed building. There are also no other small-scale windows on this elevation and the proposal would therefore not interfere with an established cluster of windows.

In relation to the windows on the east (side) elevation, two of the three windows would be altered with a lowered window sill. The two windows sit forward of a granite wall protruding from the side of the building and the retained window to the north of this wall has an extension sitting below it. The lowered window sill of these windows is therefore not considered to unbalance this elevation as the existing extension already results in an unbalanced appearance. The enlargement of the window openings would therefore be acceptable as it would not present visual harm to the listed

building and they sit on a secondary elevation of the building with little existing architectural interest.

The Managing Change guidance for windows from HES attributes the size, shape, design, proportions, materials, opening method and associated fixtures of traditional windows as significant factors that contribute to the character of a historic building. In terms of scale, the windows on the front elevation of the building would match the width of the windows on the ground floor, appearing architecturally compatible as the windows would sit higher on the building, and the height is similar and marginally subordinate to the existing window in the southwest bay. These two windows are therefore considered compatible in scale with the existing building. The two windows on the east elevation would match the scale of the windows on the southwest bay of the building and sit at the same sill level as the proposed windows on the front elevation. These windows are therefore considered complementary with the existing window and would maintain consistency across the building.

The windows have been designed to mimic the design of the existing windows, matching the vertical window arrangement to the south-west bay window and horizontal arrangement of the windows below. The existing windows on the building are a mix of sash and case and casement windows, with all the windows on the first floor being casement windows. The proposed casement windows are therefore considered to have an appropriate opening mechanism that would be in keeping with the existing character of the building. The proposed windows would also maintain the design of the stone surrounding the windows, with granite arch lintels and rybats framing the windows. The use of timber for the windows is also considered in keeping and of a suitable material for the listed building.

The proposed window openings would result in the loss of original granite which is required to offer benefit to residents and support the required standard of care. The amount of granite to be removed is considered minimal and would not be significantly detrimental to the character or interest of the building and would therefore be acceptable. In addition, the applicant has advised the granite is to be used within the gardens of the site and would therefore be suitably and visibly retained on the site in line with Policy D7 of the ALDP.

The proposed works would maintain the balance of the front elevation of the building and avoid having a detrimental impact on the fabric of the existing building whilst enhancing the useability of the space for modern requirements, ensuring the continued use of the listed building. The proposed windows have been suitably designed to maintain the architectural interest of the building and the removed granite would be appropriately reused. The proposal would therefore comply with Policy 7 of NPF4 and Policies D6, D7 and D8 of the ALDP.

## **Historic Environment Scotland**

The proposed works have been amended in an attempt to address comments from HES and maintain the architectural importance of the listed building. In response to the original comments, the size of the enlargement was reduced as suggested, resulting in a window opening with an area of c. 1.1m<sup>2</sup>. The advice provided by HES noted the significance of the principal elevation having an upwardly diminishing fenestration pattern. The amended proposal therefore sought to match the width of the ground floor windows to be compatible with the design of the building and maintain this architectural interest. The window to the south-west bay is the existing condition of the building and does not form part of the proposed works. It is therefore considered unreasonable to ask for this to be amended. It is considered that the proposed design would adequately minimise the loss of original fabric to the external wall and maintain symmetry on the front elevation by maintaining separation between the main part of the building and the two bays to the side.

In relation to the justification for the works, the supporting statement detailed that the windows are required to meet a required standard of care within the care home. In relation to the need and location of bedrooms, the number of bedrooms proposed has not changed and due to the nature of the business, a significant number of rooms are expected be used as a bedroom, demonstrated by the existing site plan showing almost every room with a window being used a bedroom or other necessary habitable room already. It is therefore considered unreasonable to ask that two bedrooms be removed from the care home for a minor loss of granite to the external walls given that the design of the windows would maintain the interest of the listed building and the granite would be retained on the site.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Approve Unconditionally

## **REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION**

A suitable justification for the enlargement of the window openings has been provided; to meet a required standard of care within the care home and as such, the principle of enlarging the windows is considered acceptable. The windows on the side elevation are also located on a secondary elevation and the alteration to these would present little architectural harm to the building. The proposed window openings would not unbalance the principal elevation and would maintain the upward fenestration pattern of the listed building. The windows on the east elevation would match the existing window on the southwest bay on the front elevation and all proposed windows would maintain the granite detail of the arch lintels and rybats framing the openings. The proposed works have thus, been designed to a high quality with due consideration for the architectural context of the listed building and would preserve the special character of the listed building while avoiding negative harm to the fabric of the building, removing a minimal level of granite which is to be retaining within the site. The proposal is therefore compliant with Policy 7 (Historic Assets and Places) of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), Policy D6 (Historic Environment), Policy D7 (Our Granite Heritage) and Policy D8 (Windows and Doors) of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023, Historic Environment Policy for Scotland and the Managing Change in the Historic Environment Guidance: Windows.