

MC/15/0082

Date Received: 12 January, 2015

Location: Former Kitchener Barracks, Dock Road, Chatham, Kent

Proposal: Application for demolition in a conservation area of unlisted structures including part of the Khartoum Building together with associated works

Applicant: JG Chatham Ltd

Agent: Mr J Bradburn Montagu Evans LLP 5 Bolton Street London W1J8BA

Ward River

Recommendation of Officers to the Planning Committee, to be considered and determined by the Planning Committee at a meeting to be held on 29 April 2015.

Recommendation Approval Subject to;

A) Resolution to approve subject to further survey work being undertaken and then if deemed acceptable, delegated authority being granted to the Head of Planning to approve subject to conditions and S106

B) The applicant / owner entering into an agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act to tie the permission into that granted under MC/15/0079

C) The imposition of the following conditions (delegated authority being granted to the Head of Planning to make minor amendments to the wording of the conditions if considered desirable before the issuing of the permission): -

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

0061_GA_17_REV_B; 0061_GA_18_REV_B; 0061_31_REV_B; 0061_GA_23_REV_B; 0061_GA_36_REV_B; 0061_GA_37_REV_B; 0061_GA_38; 0061_GA_43, as received 22 January 2015.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- 3 The work of demolition herein approved shall not take place before a contract for the carrying out of works of redevelopment of the site has been made and entered into and planning permission (including reserved matters) has been granted for such works covering the whole site and such a contract is capable of being implemented.

Reason: To safeguard the visual amenity of the area and avoid any irreversible detrimental impact to Conservation Area in accordance with Policies BNE1 and BNE14 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

- 4 No development shall take place until a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CEMP shall include amongst other matters details of: hours of construction working; measures to control noise affecting nearby residents; wheel cleaning/chassis cleaning facilities; dust control measures; pollution incident control and site contact details in case of complaints. The construction works shall thereafter be carried out at all times in accordance with the approved Construction Environmental Management Plan, unless any variations are otherwise first submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of nearby properties and to avoid any irreversible detrimental impacts to human health in accordance with policy BNE2 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

For the reasons for this recommendation for approval please see Planning Appraisal Section and Conclusions at the end of this report.

Proposal

This application seeks consent for the demolition of unlisted structures including part of the Khartoum Building together with associated works. This application should be read in conjunction with the other planning applications listed in the relevant history section below, which together form a suite of proposals for the redevelopment of the Kitchener Barracks site. The main proposals for the site are included under the outline application (MC/15/0079) and so as demolition in a Conservation Area requires planning permission a separate submission has been made.

There is a substantial amount of demolition proposed as part of the proposals and can be described as follows:

Building 4: Khartoum Building (1960s west block) and the cross ranges are of four storeys which is of buff brick laid in Flemish bond, with a rusticated ground floor and basement and dressings in red brown brick. Based on a symmetrical design in 45 bays with three bays to the north and south elevation

Building 6: Small single storey brick building with pitched slate roof, adjacent to the

north entrance gates. Rear wall of Building 6 is the listed northern boundary wall and is therefore also included in the listed building consent application (MC/15/0094).

Building 7: Single storey brick structure with slate roof with minor architectural interests. Rear wall of Building 7 is the listed northern boundary wall and is therefore and is therefore also included in the listed building consent application (MC/15/0094).

Building 8: Single storey brick structure with a mono pitched slate roof. Attached to listed northern boundary wall and is therefore also included in the listed building consent application (MC/15/0094).

Building 9: A large single storey structure comprising two large interconnecting workspaces with four roller shutters to the front (south), set within brick piers. It has a mono-pitched corrugated iron roof. Attached to listed northern boundary wall and is therefore again included in the listed building consent application (MC/15/0094).

Building 10: Single storey brick building with hipped roof. Building has some sash windows with security bars. Located south of the 1960s block and separated from it by a short section of wall.

Building 11: Single story brick building, which replaced earlier guardhouse.

Building 12: Open fronted single storey structure of corrugated iron roof.

Building 13: Single storey open fronted brick structure with a flat roof.

Building 14: Garages of single storey open fronted iron structure, adjacent to the listed wall but not attached.

Relevant Planning History

MC/15/0079	Outline Permission with some matters reserved (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) for the redevelopment of the former Kitchener Barracks for residential purposes (Class C3) including the change of use of the partly retained Khartoum Building together with associated works. Registered
MC/15/0081	Change of use of the former Barrack Block to Class C3 (residential) and associated external alterations, change of use of the former Ordnance Store to use Classes A1 (shop), A2 (financial and professional services), A3 (restaurant and cafe), A4 (drinking establishment), B1 (Business), D1 (non residential institution) and associated works. Registered
MC/15/0094	Listed Building Consent for the change of the use of former barracks block to Class C3 (residential) and associated alterations, change of use of the former Ordnance Store to use Classes A1 (shop), A2 (financial and professional services), A3 (restaurant and cafe), A4 (drinking establishment), B1 (Business), D1 (non residential institution)

	and associated restoration works, restoration of boundary wall, demolition of ancillary structures associated works. Registered
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Representations

The application has been advertised on site and in the press and by individual neighbour notification to the owners and occupiers of neighbouring properties. The Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage have also been consulted.

Three letters of representation have been received raising the following concerns and queries:

- Impacts of noise on the properties of Brompton Hill and Brompton village which is in a quiet conservation area
- Concerns that parking in Brompton Hill area would be used by new residents and asked if the access to Brompton Hill would be pedestrian only
- Concerns over subsidence following the alterations and similarly regarding potential collapse of caves under the houses
- Pressures that the influx of people will have on existing services such as schools and GPs
- Construction and demolition impacts including dust and debris impacts
- Queries whether there sufficient parking space for the houses/ flats
- Impacts of traffic and access arrangements onto dock road, particularly at peak hour times
- Queries regards the methods used in the traffic and transport survey
- Object to the A4 use in the Ordnance Store due to amount of pubs in the area who are struggling to make a living.
- In favour of redevelopment of the site, however but concerned about the impacts of the commercial options A1, A2, A3, A4, B1, D1 and its impacts on the Brompton High Street which has suffered decline, and that this development will draw away businesses from the high street and kill of our efforts of revamping and rejuvenating our High Street and village and to limit the development to residential uses

All other matters raised not listed above are non material

Historic England (English Heritage) have made the following comments:

- Generally accepts in principle the proposed redevelopment of the Kitchener barracks site, and is prepared to accept the demolition of the 1960s parts of the Khartoum building, but that their loss is only accepted if it can be demonstrated that the replacement buildings would be of appropriate design that is capable of preserving or enhancing the conservation area.
- The boundary wall to the barracks is not listed in full, but we recommend that parameter plan 2 should be amended to show the entire boundary wall retained.
- Would not object to the unlisted sections being rebuilt or repaired, as appropriate, but the overall sense of enclosure is characteristic of the barracks and as an

important illustration of the need for security in a military site should be preserved.

- Buildings 6,7 and 8 against the perimeter wall at the northern end of the site and should be treated as undesignated heritage assets and do not consider that applicants heritage statement provides adequate justification for their removal, particularly because these are buildings that appear to us capable of residential conversion and their retention would not have major impacts on the indicative masterplan and the proposed quantum of development
- Identifies that paragraphs 135 and 136 of the NPPF requires that the effects of an application on the significance of non-designated heritage assets should be taken into account in determining application and demolition of a heritage asset should not be accepted without all reasonable steps having been taken to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred (para. 136). This point is particularly relevant in this case to the 1960s ranges of the Khartoum

Development Plan

The Development Plan for the area comprises the Medway Local Plan 2003. The policies referred to within this document and used in the processing of this application have been assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 and are considered to conform. The Brompton Lines Conservation Area appraisal 2006 is also a material planning consideration.

Planning Appraisal

Main Issues

This application should be considered in association with the applications as mentioned above, for the comprehensive redevelopment of the entire Kitchener Barracks site. In terms of this application the key consideration is the impacts on the Conservation Area and amenity as a result of the proposed demolition.

Design and the Conservation Area

The site falls within the Brompton Lines Conservation and is characterised by an ensemble of military buildings, which contribute to the wider military area of Chatham. A considerable amount of demolition is proposed including various outbuildings and ancillary structures on the site, but most prominently the Western Block (1960s Range) of the Khartoum Building. The Khartoum Building is considered to make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area and is visually prominent building in this area of Chatham. The buildings were aligned north south and arranged symmetrically around a central east-west axis, with the Khartoum Building being characterised by a distinctive H Block layout, synonymous with the military function of the barracks.

The site is located within the Brompton Lines Conservation Area and, as the former site of the original Infantry Barracks (1757), is of significance in itself and as a part of the military landscape protecting the Dockyard. Only a few buildings combined with fragments of the boundary walls of the original barracks remain although the spatial layout of linear blocks, the main road, parade ground and terracing remains intact.

The most prominent building on the site is the imposing Khartoum Building, which was built in two phases during the 1930's and 1950's/60's, in a stripped down classical style. It is an example of the standard 'H' shaped 'Sandhurst' barracks type of the time, but somewhat altered to fit on its steeply sloping site. English Heritage considered the building for listing, but declined to do so.

Elsewhere on site there are relatively large areas of underused space. In general the development of the site is less intensive as compared to the very compact layout of the 1757 barracks. The complex, especially the distinctive Khartoum block, is a prominent part of the high ground above the naval Dockyard in views from many parts of Medway. The Brompton Lines Conservation Area Appraisal 2006 described the complex as follows:

'Whilst most of the 18th century barrack buildings have been demolished the original plan form of the site survives. The military character derives from the large parade ground and the rectilinear layout of highly ordered and repetitive elements. The present barracks is a largely 1930s complex of imposing character and prominent in the landscape as a result, which preserve the basic boundaries, topography, and layout of the original barracks...'

The partial demolition of the Khartoum block is a key part of the proposal and so it requires separate consideration. It is unequivocal that the proposed demolition of a substantial part of the existing buildings on site would result in a categorical change to the building fabric in this area of Chatham. The site is located within the Brompton Lines Conservation Area and there is a need to ensure that any demolition on this scale is justified and the replacement design parameters are carried out in a manner that is consistent with the Conservation Area.

The National Planning Policy Framework 2012, states under paragraph 132 that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use. Whilst the Khartoum Building and general ensemble of buildings are not designated assets it is important to appreciate this paragraph, given the importance of the Brompton Lines Conservation Area, the sum of its parts which contribute to its designation, include the Kitchener Barracks site.

Paragraph 134 states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use. While Paragraph 135 states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application, in weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. Paragraph 137 states that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.

Paragraph 138 states that not all elements of a World Heritage Site or Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 133 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 134, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.

Policies BNE13 and BNE14 of the Medway Local Plan 2003 are equally compliant in this regard. Proposals to demolish a building which makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that (i) the building is wholly beyond repair; or (ii) its design is inappropriate; or (iii) the character and appearance of the Conservation Area would be enhanced by its removal and replacement. Consent will be conditional upon no demolition occurring until a contract has been entered into for approved redevelopment of the site.

Similarly, saved Policy BNE14 identifies criteria for development within a conservation area, which are:

- Materials, features and details of buildings or structures which contribute to the character or appearance of the area should be retained or reinstated; and
- Traditional street patterns, building lines, open spaces and urban spaces, paving and roadway materials, boundary treatments and street furniture should be retained or reinstated; and
- The scale, height, mass, roofscape, materials, detailing, fenestration, plot width and depth, and visual appearance of new development should be sympathetic with existing buildings and their settings; and
- Trees, hedgerows and open spaces should be retained and protected; and
- Hard and soft landscape elements and traditional materials, which enhance the area, should be utilised.

The site is located within the urban boundary and is clearly visible from the Medway River, maintaining strong views for great distances with the urban fabric of the Medway Towns. An Outline View Assessment was submitted with the application, detailing how the building line would look in the landscape and townscape. This is particularly important given the need to ensure that any replacement buildings along the Western Section of the Dock Road frontage are of a high quality design. The application is made with matters of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale being reserved for future consideration. However the applicant has provided an indicative layout and additional information in relation to these reserved matters. This provides an adequate appreciation of the potential impacts of the development on the landscape and the character of the local area.

The retention of the key facade of the Khartoum Building, (Eastern Block) and the listed buildings and wall are to be retained and this is to be welcomed, as the demolition of the eastern range, with its characteristic facade and clock tower would have resulted in considerable disruption to the integrity of the Conservation Area.

However, the remainder of the buildings on site, with the exception of the listed structures (See application MC/15/0094), are proposed to be demolished to accommodate the proposed redevelopment. There is a need to assess the demolition of the named structures not purely in isolation but rather their contribution as a non-designated asset to the Conservation Area.

Undoubtedly, there will be a level of negative impact on the heritage of the Conservation Area as result of the demolition proposed. The key aspects in considering the substantial demolition proposed is whether the building(s) is/are no long viable for further use, and correspondingly that the demolition of the ancillary structures and outbuildings is justified, particularly in relation to the Khartoum Building (Western Block) and buildings 6, 7, 8, and as a result of the public benefits that would be achieved would outweigh the harm caused. Equally, the replacement designs must be of particular quality that will make the removal of the buildings acceptable and that the area will be generally enhanced as a result.

Although not a heritage asset, the assessment of the demolition of undesignated structures can be usefully aided by the criteria set out in Paragraph 134 of the NPPF specifically by weighing the harm caused against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use. In this regard there is robust consideration that the site is under utilised in its current form. The re-use of the site would bring back into use a large area of land in a central location, which would result a more compact urban form, which is beneficial in terms of proper planning and the provision of housing in more sustainable locations, in this case a central location close to existing services and the core area of Chatham. Whilst the impact is lessened, as the buildings in question are not designated individually but rather collectively contributes to the Conservation Area, there is keen appreciation that the demolition needs to be justified in terms of the benefits the redevelopment of the site will bring.

The retention of these elements would comprise the benefits that could be brought forward in terms of bringing a vacant site in a highly viable location back into use. Regarding buildings 6, 7, 8 the size of these units do not lend themselves to easily to conversion, being of a size that would not meet adequate housing standards exacerbated by its attachment to the listed wall, which allows only single aspect. The retention of these buildings would significantly reduce the number of units in this section of the site (as indicatively illustrated in the Masterplan), while their removal, it is considered, will better reveal the significance of these walls. Equally this section of the site is a considerable distance away from the Chatham core area, and whilst the commercial use of the Ordnance Store is acceptable, given its location and single isolated potential use and special characteristics, further commercial uses would begin to impact on the vitality of surrounding centres, therefore there is a concern regarding further commercial uses on the site, independent of the Ordnance Store.

With regard to the Khartoum Building issues would arise from its retention as it compromises the ability to provide dual aspect accommodation to the retained 1930s range, it would also significantly impact on the level of car parking provided, particularly as surface car parking would need to be provided, which would lead to a more hardened development, detrimental to the integrity of the Conservation Area. Similarly, there is duty on the Council to acknowledge and have due regard to Paragraph 173 of the National Planning Policy Framework, relative to viability and

deliverability. The imposition for this building's retention would be a considerable policy burden that would question the viability of the site, particularly given the commitment to retain the listed structures on site and the eastern range of the Khartoum Block. With due regard to this Paragraph 173 and the reasons provided regarding the considerable disruption to unit numbers, proper layout and parking arrangements and its potential for reuse (as per Policy BNE13 of the Local Plan), the demolition is considered acceptable. However, this acceptability is conditional upon no demolition occurring until a contract has been entered into for approved redevelopment of the site.

No objections are raised with regards the justification for the demolition of the both the 1960s range of the Khartoum Building and the remaining outbuildings on site, the proposal is therefore considered acceptable with regards the aforementioned elements of the NPPF 2012 and Policies BNE13 and BNE14 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

Other Matters

Given the proximity of residential dwellings to the application site it is appropriate to ensure that matters such as dust and noise are controlled when demolition works take place. Accordingly a condition is recommended to agree a construction environmental management plan before works commence. On this basis no objections are raised with regards policy BNE2 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

The proposed demolition, although significant would enable a vacant site to return to use. Although there will be a level of harm to the Conservation Area, it is considered the benefits outweigh this harm. However, consent should be conditional upon no demolition occurring until a fully approved scheme (including reserved matters) for the entire redevelopment of the site has been approved. The proposals are therefore considered acceptable with regards policies BNE1, BNE2, BNE13 and BNE14 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2012. Given that this application is part of a suite of applications relating to the development of the site the recommendation follows that of the other schemes due to the need for further ecological survey work.

This application would normally fall to be determined under officers' delegated powers, but is being reported for Members' consideration due to the number of letters of representation expressing a view contrary to the officers recommendation.

Background Papers

The relevant background papers relating to the individual applications comprise: the applications and all supporting documentation submitted therewith; and items identified in any Relevant History and Representations section within the report.

Any information referred to is available for inspection in the Planning Offices of Medway Council at Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham ME4 4TR and here

<http://publicaccess.medway.gov.uk/online-applications/>