

The Change of Use and Refurbishment

of

**Harbour House
61 Surrey Street · Littlehampton
West Sussex · BN17 5BJ**

A DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

21st March 2011

Introduction

Harbour House is a Grade II Listed building built between 1783 to 1785 as a family home, but operated in more recent years as The Lemon Tree public house and restaurant. With the demise of the public house in Littlehampton (approximately nine in 2008 alone ceased trading) The Lemon Tree was placed in the hands of the receivers after only two years of business. The property since then has remained derelict and despite extensive marketing has only recently been purchased by its current owners Mr and Mrs PJ Sykes. Mr and Mrs Sykes now intend to restore the property, taking into account the nature of its original characteristics, to return the building to its original use as a family home.

Heritage Statement

Extensive historical research carried out by Dr Ian Friel, an eminent writer and local historian, suggests that the plot for No. 61 was laid out by an Arundel builder on freehold land owned by the Norfolk Estate in 1783. Annual Land Tax Assessments point to its construction between 1783 to 1785 on behalf of Mr Robert Carver whose family continued to occupy the house until 1871.

The frontage of No. 61 suggests that it was constructed as a house of some prestige, the brickwork of blue headers indicates that as a more expensive material this was chosen in preference to the more readily available flint-work commonly used in this area. Red stretcher bricks were used to create a three course decorative motif between ground and first floor as well as the arched soldier courses above the 12 pane sliding sash windows and to form the quoins.

Although the back and sides of the building are now covered over it is possible that flint was used in their construction. The roof is a mansard design, possibly Georgian, but unlikely to be original. A row of dentil headers have been concealed by a fascia board.

In plan the original ground floor probably had four rooms with four above arranged symmetrically (see reconstruction sketch plan - Appendix A). Chimneys were positioned on both the east and west sides of the building allowing for a central hallway (that on the east side was subsequently removed).

The layout of this building probably remained much unchanged until 1910 when a scheme was submitted to the LUDC for a rear extension comprising a scullery, bathroom and W.C.s. A reading room was formed by knocking together the parlour on the north side and dining room on the south (see reconstruction sketch plan - Appendix A).

By this stage the property had been leased to the British and Foreign Sailors' Society since 1894.

In 1911-1912 a much larger extension was added to the rear in the form of the "New Hall" designed as a billiard hall which also connected with the reading room through the removal of a large section of the rear wall of the original building. The new hall was designed in a medieval style with a large stone mullioned window with leaded lights to the south elevation and exposed timber trusses to the interior. The carefully balanced symmetry of the north elevation was also destroyed at this time with the insertion of a four bay mullioned window to the frontage. A further major change to the exterior was made in 1916 in the form of a two storey building incorporating the 19th Century rear extension to create a new bedroom and additional bathrooms and W.C.s.

In 1922 the BFSS closed and in the same year in response to Littlehampton's popularity as a holiday destination became Read's Restaurant and in 1938 the freehold was purchased from the Norfolk Estate.

In 1951 the building was refurbished as The Cairo Club, boasting a cocktail bar, dance floor, full board and lodging and continued as a club until 1999. Subsequently it became in 2003 Carver's Restaurant and latterly between 2005 - 2007 The Lemon Tree.

Since 1922 internal alterations would appear to have extensively altered the internal layout. Most significantly in recent years the Georgian staircase has been removed and replaced with an open tread staircase and partitions removed and replaced with supporting pillars.

The land to the rear of No. 61 originally encompassed Corney and Carver's shipyard which, evidence suggests, was in operation by 1803 and was expanded in 1813 to fill the triangle of land formed in the bend of the riverbank by Surrey Street and Pier Road and continued to operate until the 1820's.

Within the curtilage of No. 61 was also constructed at some stage a mortuary and this is evident on a map of 1898. The base of which can be identified in the south-west corner of the courtyard.

Proposal

The main intention is to restore the original features which would characterise the building as a family home of the Georgian era as well as enhancing the additions made in the early 20th century to the south façade.

a) The proposed external changes are as follows:

- Reinstall railings to the plinth wall to match those of No. 59.
- Remove the 4-bay mullioned window from the front elevation and reinstall a 12 pane sliding sash window to the front elevation together with red arched brick soldier course, red brick quoins and blue headers.
- Remove fascia board at eaves level to reveal dentil course.
- Remove ventilation duct from front elevation and make good.
- Form new stone portico and columns and provide new timber front door.
- Remove SVP to roof and replace with in-line tile vent.
- Replace existing side door and window with bay window and fit moulded coving above.
- Form new moulded canopy to remodelled dormer window.
- Form new doorway and fit new panelled door and side window.
- Replace defective skylight with new conservation style skylight
- Clean existing flint walls of paint.
- Form new balcony to the Master Bedroom and new French windows.
- Demolish shed and store to south elevation and form new kitchen extension with glazed doors.
- Rebuild south elevation garden wall with railings above.
- Form new gateway to the west elevation.
- Construct timber boarded boathouse.
- Form new paved courtyard / parking area with brick paviors.

b) The proposed internal changes are as follows:

- Removal of open-tread staircase and replacement with Georgian style staircase (based upon design of staircases at Floyds Corner and No. 59).
- Reinstall original wall layout to form dining room.
- Removal of W.C.s to form snug.
- Formation of new utility room and W.C.
- Reinstall Georgian panelling, skirtings and doors etc (based upon the original Georgian detailing evident at Floyds Corner and No. 59).
- Reinstall internal walls at first floor level to create 3 No. bedrooms together with en-suite.
- Remove service stair between ground and first floor.
- Form new bathroom at second floor level.
- Increase floor level by approximately 250mm to the Edwardian ground floor plan.

Policy Background

a) Conservation Areas Policy Area 2

No. 61 falls within River Road Conservation Area, which is situated to the west of Littlehampton town centre and runs parallel to the River Arun. Since No. 61 was built as a town house the proposal to revert back to its original status would accord with the building types which primarily constitute this area. The intention to reinstate and enhance the original characteristics of the building will both improve the visual quality of the building itself as well as contribute to the special character of the area.

b) Littlehampton Harbour Policy 8

It would appear from Inset Plan N that only the northern section of No. 61 falls within the area controlled by Littlehampton Harbour Policy 8. This would therefore refer to the original Georgian building rather than the later additions. The strategy states that it will support "commercial and industrial activities" which "both economically and environmentally enhance the links between the town centre and the harbour". Sadly, however, it has become apparent that No. 61 as a commercial concern is no longer viable. Despite renovation works carried out by the owners of Carvers restaurant 2003 and the various internal changes carried out in 2005, both businesses failed. Reasons for this could be due not only to the national decline in bars and restaurants but also the competition posed by the recently opened Harbour Lights Café and Bistro situated directly to the west of No.61, which offers food and alcoholic drinks throughout the day. As a result of the closure of The Lemon Tree the property has now lain derelict for nearly 4 years, its run-down appearance detracting from an otherwise attractive environment. Mr and Mrs Sykes' proposals to restore the property will therefore upgrade this important and highly visible building thus contributing immeasurably to the historical setting of the area.

Previous Applications

As sourced from Arun District Council's online planning applications, the following applications were made during the building's life span as the Cairo Club: LU/174/71, LU/560/73, LU/370/79/LB, LU/85/80/LB, LU/351/82/LB and LU/326/83/L. Further applications were made as LU/245/00, LU/34/03, LU/35/03/L, LU/352/05/L, LU/259/06/L and LU/324/06/L. In 2000 a previous application received consent for a change of use from a private members club to a private dwelling.

Design Principles

The defining principle has been to enhance and restore each aspect of the building according to its origin. The main frontage was originally conceived as a simple, symmetrical Georgian arrangement, rather dumpy in stature but very English in character. The crude insertion of the stone mullioned window in 1911 severely compromised the balance of the façade; its removal and reinstatement of a 12 pane casement window is therefore intended to readdress the symmetry. The provision of a new porch and a timber panelled front door is intended to reinforce the original perception that this was to be viewed as a high-status building.

The removal of the fascia board will reveal the original dentil course.

The improvement of the rear elevation is to be achieved through the removal of the lean-to sheds set against the west wall and resurfacing / landscaping of the courtyard area. The Edwardian extension is to receive the addition of a balcony and the insertion of French windows to the Master Bedroom with glazed doors below will be carried out in the Edwardian aesthetic.

The side elevation will continue to reflect the transition between the Georgian and Edwardian elements with its mixture of fenestration. A new Georgian style bay window is to be inserted in lieu of the existing door and window on the west elevation and a new Edwardian style panelled door and side window formed to relate to the 20th century extension.

Use

The proposal is for a change of use from restaurant and bar to a single private domestic unit.

Amount

Existing Floor Area = 366 m²

Proposed Floor Area:

Existing Floor Area	366 m ²
Stores (to be demolished)	- 8 m ²
	<u>358 m²</u>

New Extension	17.5m ²
New Boat House	+ 26 m ²
	<u>43.5m²</u>

Total Proposed Floor Area = 401.5m²

N.B. All areas indicated are external gross m²

Layout

The main front door entrance will be retained; this involves a slight step down from pavement level. A new side entrance is to be formed and the rear entrance will be via the gate on the west elevation.

Internally the intention is to restore the symmetrical layout of the Georgian plan, reinstating the missing walls to achieve this. The staircase however has been re-sited at the centre of the building to assist circulation rather than in the entrance hall, which would have been its location when the depth of the house was only two rooms.

Externally the entrance gate for vehicular access to the courtyard has been relocated on the west side from the south. This will enable the courtyard to be landscaped.

Scale

The only additional area will be in the form of the kitchen extension, which will replace an earlier porch, and the Boat House, which historical plans indicate was close to the site of the mortuary and water tower. Taking into account the demolition of the lean-to stores the total additional area amounts to 43.5m².

Landscaping

The intention is to reform the south wall to the courtyard in flint work with brick quoins and for security set railings above to match in design those on the front elevation. The Boat House will border the south-east side of the courtyard and new metal gates will afford access from the street. The existing concrete paving slabs will be taken up and replaced with brick paviors more sympathetic to the style of the property. The planting will be simple, generally of salt resistant shrubs, suitable for exposure near the sea.

Appearance

All materials used for the restoration of the property will be to match the existing materials exactly; blue header bricks and lime mortar with red brick features to the front elevation and red brick to the rear of the building and new orangery. The roof to the orangery will be glazed with fine timber glazing bars and timber cornice. All new windows and doors will be painted timber. The boat house and balcony joinery will have a stained opaque finish with clay tiles to match the main house.

Access

Surrey Street can be easily accessed by public transport. Littlehampton is served by a number of bus routes and it is a short walk to the railway station. The building is also easily accessed as a pedestrian or cyclist.

Disability access is a little more difficult since the front door is accessed via a step down from the pavement level, however, the proposal to raise the rear area of the property will achieve level access from the courtyard.

Photographic Record



South Elevation



West Elevation



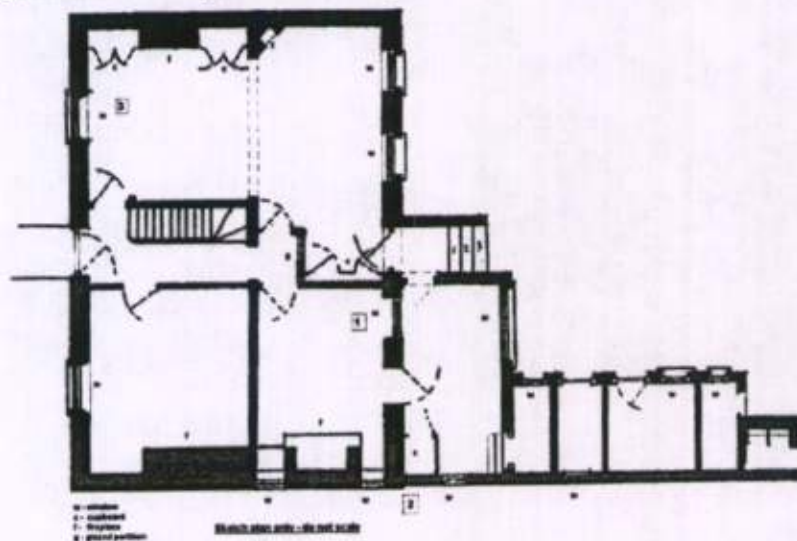
North Elevation



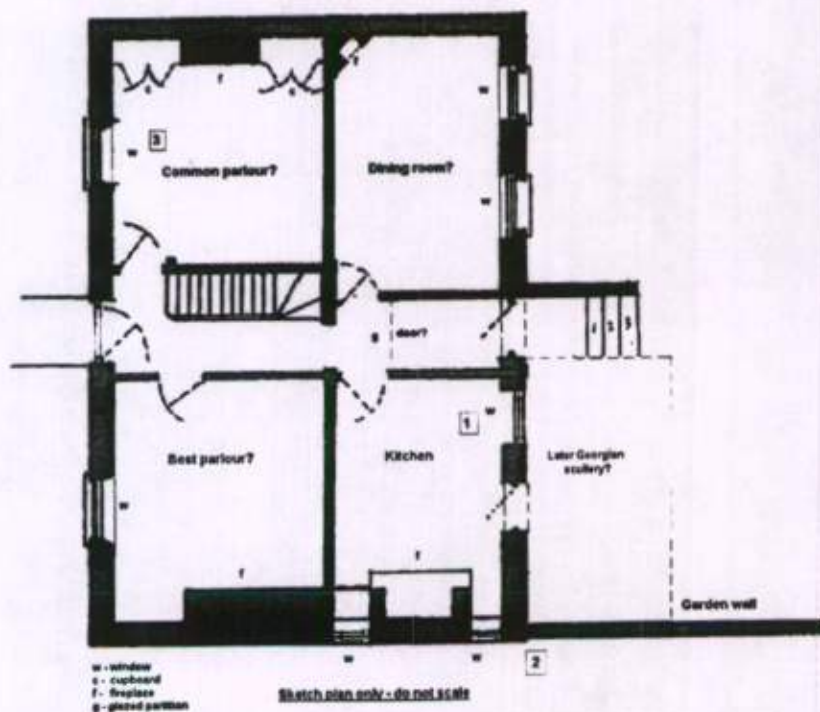
North Elevation

Appendix A

Images 10 and 11: larger reference copies



10. Sketch plan, based on the 1910 plan, showing features discussed in the text.



11. A reconstruction of the possible original Georgian layout of the house.