

## Objection in respect of proposed addition of St Catherine's Lodge, St Catherine's Terrace.

REPORT COMMENTS

DATE 22/12/2022

Report by Donald M Shearer RIBA ARB

SITE - ST CATHERINE'S LODGE, HOVE

### INTRODUCTION

The report attached does not reach the professional standards required for this type of presentation that comments on historical elements of architectural significance.

As such it is unprofessional, speculative, preconceived and a contrived manipulation of facts to promote an emotional interface in a process that is unequivocally objective in its foundation. This report is deliberately concise to emphasis how only a slightly more rigorous and professional approach to reporting could have delivered a far more objective analysis rather than its conception being driven by a preconceived objective as a **fait accompli**.



Image A of 11/12 St Catherines Terrace



Image B of 42 / 43 Medina Villas

11/12 St Catherine's Lodge 's less decorative roughcast finished very utilitarian interpretation of the Dutch Gable design language. In contrast to a balanced well-defined decorative façade with original facing bricks and intricate detailing at 43/45 Media Villas.



Image C of detailed Dutch Gable at 12 St Catherines Terrace





Image D of detailed Dutch Gable 43 Medina Villas



Image E of 42/43 Medina Villas & St Catherine's Lodge urban context

The fragmented collision of disparate materials and forms of St Catherine's Lodge on the right of this image sit uncomfortably with the symmetrical order, craftsmanship, consistent use of materials and simple visual harmony of 42 /43 Medina Villas on the left of the image.

### **HISTORIC AND EVIDENTIAL INTEREST**

The officer report asserts that:-

The present form of the building is the outcome of changes representing the evolution of the building first as single private residences, which were combined to form St. Catherine's Lodge hotel

in the 1920s, reflecting how large single houses were no longer affordable as society changed post-war.

This is a romanticised word pastiche with no factual resilience.

Originally there were 4 houses on this site, who's present form so robustly confused that it is next to impossible to define these original 4 dwellings original plan or fenestration form.

This is as a direct result of the original design execution being so compromised that it leant itself to adaption rather than preservation as has been achieved at 42/43 Medina Villas, that was listed recently 02-Nov-1992. 42/43 Medina Villas, is grade II listed building was probably designed by the Architect F.D.Bannister. St Catherine's Lodge did not have the same Architectural skill applied to its design as can be clearly illustrated by the images A to E above.

### **TOWNSCAPE INTEREST**

#### **The Planner's report states:-**

Its distinctive character and appearance, including many elements of good quality architectural detailing, making a positive contribution to the character and appearance to the conservation area

Images A to E clearly illustrate the reality that St Catherine's Lodge has not good quality architectural detailing when compared to the robust Architectural thought that has been applied to the listed 42/43 Medina Villas building.

#### **The Planner's report states:-**

it is atypical in style, design and materials compared to the surrounding area

Images A to E clearly illustrate the reality that St Catherine's Lodge is not only different from the surrounding area it is visually compromised as roughcast render and stripped back superficial detailing is in reality not a quirky interest but a visual compromise that only informs visual discord.

Rarity and Representativeness

#### **The Planner's report states:-**

The property is considered to be a good example of a design and style that is uncommon in the Cliftonville conservation area and the city generally. It is part of the vestiges of an enclave of similar grand Dutch gabled brick houses that previously existed at the southern end of Medina Villas,

Images A to E clearly illustrate the reality that St Catherine's Lodge is not an example of good design and style. These images also show that it is not similar to grand Dutch Gable Houses such as 42 / 43 Medina Villas.

### **Intactness**

#### **The Planner's report states:-**

Although subject to significant alteration and extensions from its original houses in the 20th century, the building known as St Catherine's Lodge retains a sense of completeness and many external features of quality and craftsmanship.

Images A to E clearly illustrate the reality that St Catherine's Lodge does not give a sense of completeness and is bereft of any features of quality and craftsmanship. This fact is highlighted by

even the most superficial comparison with 42/43 Medina Villas as the threshold comparison established with its listing just 30 years ago.



Image F corner of Medina Villas & St Catherine's Terrace

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The planners state:-

St Catherine's Lodge is recommended to be included in the Local List as it is considered to be distinct from, but make a very positive contribution to, the character and appearance of the Cliftonville conservation area through its conscious design and aesthetic interest in the townscape, whilst providing physical and evidential links to the historic development of the area.

Image F clearly illustrates slate roof finishes colliding with plain tile roof finishes, balcony railings without any balcony poor quality brick facades juxtaposed with half timbering ridge tiles haphazardly collected on skylines. This is certainly a distinctive form but the case for this being a very positive contribution to the character and appearance of a conservation area is clearly a fantasy.

The facts are that if this is really a conscious design rather than a unfortunate collision of fragmented ideas this building is best forgotten not celebrated.

Donald Shearer ARB RIBA

## APPENDIX I

### Listed building Entry for 42 /43 Mena Villas

*Semi-detached villa. c1852, refenestrated late C19. Probably by F.D.Bannister. Jacobethan style. Red brick with diaper pattern, painted quoins distinguish wings and window openings, painted plinth, slate roof with cross gables, coped verges, external stacks with tall clusters of 6 ornamental chimney pots on brick plinths with quoins. Probably H-plan; semi-detached villa with entrances on returns of slightly projecting wings. 2 storeys over basement plus attic, 1:2:1 bays, attic casements with one horizontal glazing bar, others sash windows without glazing bars, shaped gables with finials and kneelers to wings, more ornamental gables with finials to two 2-light attic dormers rising from eaves, 2-light windows gable ends, 2-storey canted bays with ornamental frieze and decorative string of quatrefoils, some rebuilding to roofline of right hand bay (No.43), central mullions with hoodmoulds forming 2 narrow windows to central bays on both storeys; centre range two 2-light with central mullion linked by continuous hoodmould. Left return (No.42): full-height projecting gable wing right, entrance centre, external stack right, 2-light window in gable end, 3-light below and single storey canted bay on ground floor; entrance to left via porch with shaped gable and finial, cambered head opening, recessed door, 2-light window above, small 2-light window in shaped gabled dormer with finial; large external stack right, tall chimney pots removed. Similar right return (No.43) but gable of porch and finial to east gable missing. Low wall fronting road, brick with moulded coping, octagonal gatepiers and moulded coping, central pier at junction with wall returned to building. F.D.Bannister, the architect responsible for much of Upper Cliftonville, as this area was known, was resident at No 42 in 1856. (Middleton J: A History of Hove: 1979*