



WANDSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SUMMARY PROOF OF EVIDENCE

**BARRY SELLERS MA (UD), BA (HONS ARCH), BA (HONS) TP, DIP UD, MRTPI,
IHBC, RECOGNISED PRACTITIONER URBAN DESIGN
on behalf of London Borough of Wandsworth**

Site: Mount Clare, Minstead Gardens, SW15 4EE

PINS Ref: APP/H5960//W/25/3371729

LPA Ref: 2025/0074

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 My name is Barry Sellers. I am a Principal Planner (Urban Design) who formerly managed the Urban Design and Conservation Team for both Wandsworth and Richmond Councils. I joined Wandsworth Borough Council (the Council) in April 1988 and have 37 years' experience working in the borough.
- 1.2 I have prepared a Proof of Evidence (PoE) and this Summary on behalf of the Council. It relates to a Planning Appeal under section 195 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for Mount Clare Campus, Minstead Gardens, SW15 4EE ("The Site").
- 1.3 The Site comprises Mount Clare campus, which is situated towards the southwestern part of the Alton West Estate. The Site falls within the Alton Conservation Area and contains two listed buildings, Mount Clare (Grade I) and the Temple (Grade II*). Most of the Site also lies within the Alton West Estate Registered Park and Garden.
- 1.4 It is my understanding that Mount Clare was last used for filming purposes, though previously used for administrative purposes by the University of Roehampton (UoR). Within the grounds are Picasso House which was built as staff accommodation and a dining hall. It was more recently used to house visiting lecturers and other people associated with the UoR. Within the grounds are also 15 former student blocks, now vacant, and the former Principal's Lodge, which has been vacant and in a derelict condition for a number of years.

2. THE APPEAL PROPOSAL

- 2.1 This appeal is against the non-determination of planning application 2025/0074 in respect of a site at Mount Clare Campus, Minstead Gardens, Roehampton Gate, SW15 4EE.
- 2.2 The application involves a permanent change of use of the existing buildings to temporary accommodation as a hostel (sui generis use class) to accommodate 264

rooms with common facilities, alongside the replacement of existing bungalow building and provision of ancillary refuse/cycle stores, landscaping, play space and associated works.

2.3 A delegated officer's report has been prepared and had it been presented to Planning Committee for a decision, the application would have been recommended for refusal. My PoE should therefore be read in conjunction with that officer's report, the Council's Statement of Case and the Statement of Common Ground. In addition, the proof of evidence should also be read alongside the other Proofs of Evidence that have been prepared on behalf of the Council, by Mr. Nik Smith (Nexus Planning), Mr Dave Worth (Director of Housing Services) and Ms. Siri Thafvelin (Principal Planning Officer, Wandsworth Borough Council).

2.4 My PoE addresses Putative Reason for Refusal 6, reproduced below:

"The Application has failed to provide sufficient information to properly assess the impact of the proposal upon relevant heritage assets, which include Mount Clare House, the Doric Temple, the Registered Park and Garden and the Conservation Area. The Application has not considered the future role of the Doric Temple in terms of its long-term management and maintenance, nor the potential for the re-instatement of the pond in front of the Temple. Further, there is a clear risk to Mount Clare House and the Doric Temple of further degradation/deterioration without any proposals for their proper management and protection. The proposed development has failed to demonstrate that it meets the requirements set out in the Local Plan (2023) site allocation RO2 (Mount Clare, Minstead Gardens, Roehampton, SW15), policies D3 and HC1 of the London Plan (2021) and Local Plan policy LP3. The application has also failed to demonstrate how it would comply with s66(1) and 72(1) Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990."

3. **POLICY BACKGROUND**

3.1 In my PoE I refer to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), London Plan, Adopted Wandsworth Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Guidance.

- 3.2 As regards the London Plan, I refer to the relevant planning policies that are instrumental in the decision-making process as they affect the Site.
- 3.3 In terms of the Adopted Wandsworth Local Plan, I refer to the relevant policies on Heritage matters that need to be taken into consideration in assessing the planning application.

4. **SIGNIFICANCE OF DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS**

- 4.1 In my PoE I describe each of the Designated Heritage Assets within the Site and set out their significance.
- 4.2 The Designated Heritage Assets are:
- Mount Clare (Grade I) Listed Building
 - The Temple (Grade II*) Listed Building
 - Registered Park and Garden – Alton West Landscaping (Grade II)
 - Alton Conservation Area
 - Roehampton Archaeological Priority Area
- 4.3 Mount Clare (Grade I) – a building of national architectural and historical importance.
- 4.4 The Temple (Grade II*) – a building of national architectural and historical importance.
- 4.5 Alton West Landscaping – Registered Park and Garden (Grade II). This was designated on 10 June 2020.
- 4.6 Alton West Conservation Area – the Conservation Area was designated in 2001 following the designation of a number of 20th century buildings. An updated Conservation Area Appraisal was approved in August 2023. The report sets out the significance of the Conservation Area.

5. IMPACT ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HERITAGE ASSETS

- 5.1 In my PoE I set out the impact of the proposals on each of the Designated Heritage Assets.
- 5.2 Mount Clare: the appellants have no clear plans of how Mount Clare would be used, yet the change of use application covers the whole site.
- 5.3 The Temple: the proposed rebuilding of the former Principal's Lodge would cause less than substantial harm to each of the designated heritage assets. This is because when it was built it had an adverse impact on the setting of the Temple and its historic association with Mount Clare and infilled the large pond, which formed part of the significance to the setting.
- 5.4 The Alton West Registered Park and Garden: the cumulative impact of the appellants' proposals would result in harm to the significance of the landscape of the Registered Park and Garden, amounting to less than substantial harm.
- 5.5 The Alton Conservation Area: the negative impacts on the significance of the conservation area from the proposed development arise mainly from the following:
- rebuilding of the former Lodge;
 - cumulative impact from interventions within the Registered Park & Garden;
 - lack of definite proposals for the future of Mount Clare (Grade I) and the Temple (Grade II*); and
 - lack of management & maintenance plans for the designated heritage assets.
- 5.6 The Roehampton Archaeological Priority Area: the appellants will need to submit an Archaeological Desktop Study, as a planning condition will need to be applied to any permission for development on the Site.
- 5.7 The policies in the Wandsworth Local Plan envisage development proposals coming forward which:

- A) regenerate the Site through a mixed-use development with residential use together with the designated heritage assets; and
- B) take the opportunity to preserve and enhance those assets in line with the NPPF and Local Plan policies.

5.8 As set out in my PoE, this proposal fails to achieve the aspirations of the relevant policies and therefore contravenes them.

5.9 Further, this application also represents a missed opportunity to achieve the aims of enhancing the heritage interest of the Site through regeneration. In particular, the decision to re-instate the former Lodge, which removes the opportunity to re-instate the pond in front of the Temple which is a requirement of the Policy (although this is noted as a biodiversity reason it would have significant heritage benefit by restoring the significance of part of the setting to the Temple).

6. **CONCLUSION**

6.1 It is not clear from the submission to what use Mount Clare will be put.

6.2 If it is to remain vacant, as I understand it is at present, then the Appellants ought to have provided details of how the building is to be maintained and safeguarded against unauthorised entry and potential vandalism. There is concern that the building will deteriorate and may need to be placed on the Heritage at Risk Register, irrespective of whether or not the proposal is approved.

6.3 Similarly, the Temple is currently vacant and in disrepair being on the Heritage at Risk Register since 2013. Again, the Appellants have not submitted any information as to its future repair and maintenance or its security from further vandalism and unauthorised entry.

6.4 The lack of detail with regards to the Appellant's proposals has meant that it has been difficult to assess the level of harm. However, I consider that this would fall within the less than substantial bracket for each asset.

- 6.5 In my PoE I have suggested that management plans for the repair and maintenance of the designated heritage assets be submitted for approval.
- 6.6 The Appellant's proposals will not preserve and enhance the listed buildings and the conservation area and therefore they are not in accordance with Section 66(1) and Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.