



GIBRALTAR HERITAGE TRUST

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Date: 29th January 2015

KGV Site and Ex Bishop Healy Home Historical Summary:

The foundation stone for the King George V Memorial Hospital was laid on 27th May 1938 by the Governor at the time, Sir Charles Harrington. It was built as a Chest Hospital, designed to cater for sufferers of tuberculosis. The hospital was financed by public subscription after a fund was started in honour of King George V's Silver Jubilee. The hospital was therefore named after the late King and upon completion was a welcome addition to Gibraltar's existing hospital facilities.¹ It was a civilian hospital, however, with the outbreak of World War II between 1940-45 the building was used as a Military Hospital. In 1951, the hospital is recorded as having 64 beds. From 1955 onwards, as a result of the dramatic decline of tuberculosis in the community, medical cases began to be housed at the King George V Hospital thereby relieving pressure on the medical beds in the Colonial Hospital. In 1971, with the completion of the John Mackintosh Wing at St. Bernard's Hospital to cater for medical cases, the vacated KGV Hospital was renovated and adapted to treat and nurse patients with mental illness.² This has remained the case to this day. The building has had various extensions over the years but the main central building is still intact.

Information on the building known as the Ex Bishop Healy Home is sparser. It appears that it functioned as the sisters' quarters for the KGV hospital and is therefore part of the complex. The building, later named after Bishop Healy, Bishop of Gibraltar between 1956 and 1973 operated as a children's home until the late 1990s. It is a building of typical Gibraltar colonial architecture with a mostly symmetrically balanced frontage.



Fig 1.

¹ Benady, S. (1994) *Civil Hospital & Epidemics in Gibraltar*, London: Gibraltar Books

² Sercombe, K. (2014) *History of Nursing in Gibraltar*, Gibraltar: author

There are no in principle objections to the tender of the plot for redevelopment, nevertheless, there are number of elements that should be retained so as to maintain the historical significance of the site. All extensions and accretions to the original building can be removed, however we would recommend the retention of the original buildings and roofscapes – see roofs outlined in Fig 1.

We agree that a height cap should be imposed at tender level. Due to the sloping nature of the topography of the site, we believe that it is right that it should follow the Europa Road and South Barrack Road level as this will protect views and vistas of the Harbour from Europa Road and South Barrack Road.

We would recommend that the historical statement supplied above is included in the tender package.