

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

HISTORIC BUILDINGS ADVISOR CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Application Number: A/103/11 and A/104/11

Address: Pigeon House, High Street, Angmering

Description: Application for linked range to provide kitchen and master bedroom over, internal refit of existing kitchen to form dining room.

Case Officer: Anita Gardner

Site Visit: 9 November 2011

Objection

The principal issue with this scheme is the impact of the proposed building on the setting of the listed building and the broader historic group situated within its curtilage. The new building is considered overly intrusive and harmful to the appreciation of the group within the historic courtyard setting – a context that has remained largely unchanged for over 170 years. Furthermore, under the terms of PPS5, the proposal should provide justification for the harm and where this is not forthcoming, explain what the broader benefits of the scheme are to offset this. Neither appears to be provided here.

According to the historic mapping, the building group and the layout of the house, barn, stables and workshop has remained largely intact since at least 1838 (as shown on the tithe map of that date). Whilst these main elements appear to have experienced some minor alterations and changes, the form and structure of the main courtyard and has been generally preserved throughout this time (a point acknowledged in the D&A statement, 3.1). Here, the buildings have remained orientated and focused on the main courtyard with the result that spatially they are fundamentally inward looking.

As recognized within the application the building group all have individual significance as heritage assets. The house is considered to originate from the 14thc, the barn the 18thc and the workshop and stables at least the 19thc and possibly the 18thc. As such they result in a very pleasant historic grouping which is sensitively balanced and focused around a core space.

Unfortunately, the proposed building does not engage particularly well with this group or space. Viewed from the entrance, the space between the main house and the barn is obscured, whilst the building form itself is overly complex and a potential 'modern' distraction. Perhaps most damaging, is the issue that the building has the appearance of a separate dwelling and is not appropriately subservient as a simple subsidiary addition. Its 'L' shape form and orientation away towards the north are also alien to the concept of the

courtyard and as such creates a distraction to it. This is likely to affect the appreciation of the heritage assets and their historic setting.

The position of the building also results in direct material impact on the garden wall which becomes absorbed into the fabric of the new building, whilst further elements of historic wall (which at the very least will have archaeological value), are cleared away to make way for the 'extension'. It should be noted that the attempted incorporation of historic walls into new structures is a risk and can result in loss or rebuilding.

As well as the shape and orientation of the building, the scale, massing and material of the structure is also highly problematic. A two storey building here will have an impact on the appreciation of the listed house and its setting. Its height and scale certainly appears to compete with the house and the adjacent barn, particularly from the north and will be dominant from within the garden. It should be remembered here that the issue of 'setting' is not determined by public amenity, nor is it particularly limited. A number of issues, some of which are raised here, should be taken into account here and include:

- Proximity to asset
- Extent
- Position in relation to key views
- Prominence, dominance, or conspicuousness
- Competition with or distraction from the asset
- Dimensions, scale and massing
- Visual permeability (extent to which it can be seen through)
- Introduction of movement or activity
- Change to built surroundings and spaces
- Change to skyline
- Noise, odour, vibration, dust, etc
- Lighting effects and 'light spill'
- Change to general character (eg Suburbanising or industrialising)
- Changes to land use, land cover, tree cover

The lack of subservience is further compounded by the proposed use of high flint and brick elevations. Given the building's scale, the use of masonry here only adds to the building's weight and impact. As such it is not materially subservient to the adjacent assets, particularly with the barn which is partially a soft structure.

Whilst these alterations can be seen to constitute significant harm to the heritage assets and their setting, the scheme is further compromised by the lack of justification as required by PPS5. The new build results in the formation of only one bedroom and what appears to be an excessively large kitchen that occupies two thirds of the ground floor. It is also some distance from the dining room and requires food to be carried through a family room

and a lobby before arriving at the table. As a floor plan, this is at the very least, unconvincing. The former dining room meanwhile appears largely vacant. The large bathroom and three closets on the first floor of the new build are all low status uses, but occupy large amounts of floor space. Again, I would dispute the justification for this given scale, massing and detrimental impact of the new building on its protected setting.

For the reasons set out above this scheme cannot be supported.

Ian Wightman
Historic Buildings Adviser