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From: Martyn White <Martyn.White@arun.gov.uk> **On Behalf Of** Conservation Officer
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To: Planning.Responses <Planning.Responses@arun.gov.uk>
Subject: BR/5/25/PL

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St Julianas Convent Marian Way Bognor Regis PO21 1PA

Change of Use from Convent (Sui Generis) to Residential Use (C3) for Adults with Learning Difficulties and Autism and minor amendments to external appearance.

A map-based assessment has identified that the site is adjacent to the Bognor Regis: Hotham Park Conservation Area (Upper Bognor Road and Mead Lane) and Hotham Park House (Grade II Listed Building).

The conservation area mainly covers that part of the town that Sir Richard Hotham, intended to establish as an 'aristocratic quarter' (close to his own home). Upper Bognor Road comprises some of the most interesting and historic buildings in Bognor Regis which were conceived by him, including The Dome, which is the town's only Grade 1 listed building. Whilst The Dome, Mordington and St Michaels were initially constructed to attract the elite of society, they now form part of a university complex which promotes the development of new technology. These important and grand buildings are grouped in a crescent and are set back from the main road in the remains of their heavily landscaped grounds, and represent an interesting example of late Georgian seaside resort planning.

The landscape of trees and a series of open spaces greatly contributes to the semi-rural character, and is represented with the inclusion of Hotham Park within the conservation area boundary. This is further enhanced by the traditional and important boundary walling, which is

visible from various vantage points in the conservation area and are constructed from local building materials. Some of these materials bearing the name of the town itself: Bognor Rock.

Within Mead Lane there is a mixture of building styles and ages but there is a domestic scale to the street scene and the buildings present. The narrow nature of the lane and the fact that the buildings either front directly onto it, or very close to it, means that collectively they have the effect of enclosing it, which constrains views and creates an intimate atmosphere. The higher density and domestic character of Mead Lane makes for an interesting contrast with the formal low density and spacious nature of the historic complex of buildings and grounds in Upper Bognor Road.

Hotham Park House was built in 1793 by Sir Richard Hotham, the founder of Bognor, as his own residence. It is 2 storeys and semi-basement, stuccoed. Cornice and parapet. 2 large bays of 3 windows each on both floors with one window on the outer side of them and 2 between. The bays are linked on the ground floor by an arcaded verandah raised above the ground level with an iron railing between the columns and approached at each end by a curved flight of steps with handrail.

The south front has a curved bay containing 3 windows. At the north-west corner of the house is a tower built in 4 sections, each set back within the lower. Clock face on the north and south sides of the top section and cupola containing a bell over supported on 8 columns with weather vane surmounting it.

The building is considered to derive its significance from its architectural and historical interest.

The Proposal

The proposal is for the change of use from convent (sui generis) to residential use (c3) for adults with learning difficulties and autism, and minor amendments to the external appearance of the building.

The building is a former Convent which was constructed in late 1980's to house convalescing Catholic nuns but has ceased being used as such. It comprises a part two storey part single storey building. The single storey element is arranged around a central courtyard whilst the two-storey element features an atrium with various rooms including a Chapel space. On the south side of the property there is a conservatory-style extension which overlooks the amenity area. Additionally, there is a detached double garage at the north-east of the site. The building is constructed with brick elevations and pitched slate roofs.

From a built historic environment perspective the main issues relate to the change of use and any external alterations to the building. I am of the opinion that the change of use will not cause harm to the established character of the conservation area and will ensure that the building is put back into use and appropriately maintained.

I note from reviewing the Heritage and Planning Statements that externally the only change to the building will consist of replacing the windows on a 'like for like' basis and minor amendments to doors and windows. These are acceptable and would not cause harm.

However, I also note from reviewing the proposed plans that the intention is to install solar panels in certain locations. These would be the southern elevations of the building. When I visited the site, it was clear that the part of the building can be seen in the context of the neighbouring listed building, when viewed from Gloucester Road. The solar panels would be located on a slate roof which would help for them to sit more discretely, and potentially reduce their impact. Therefore, on balance, this element is also acceptable. This is partly on the condition that the design is

appropriate for their sensitive context, and that they are removed when they are no longer needed.

Conclusion

The application is considered to not cause harm to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or its/their setting. As a consequence, it should be determined in accordance with the relevant policies within the Development Plan, along with these comments. You will also need to take into account the contents of section 66 & 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended).

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