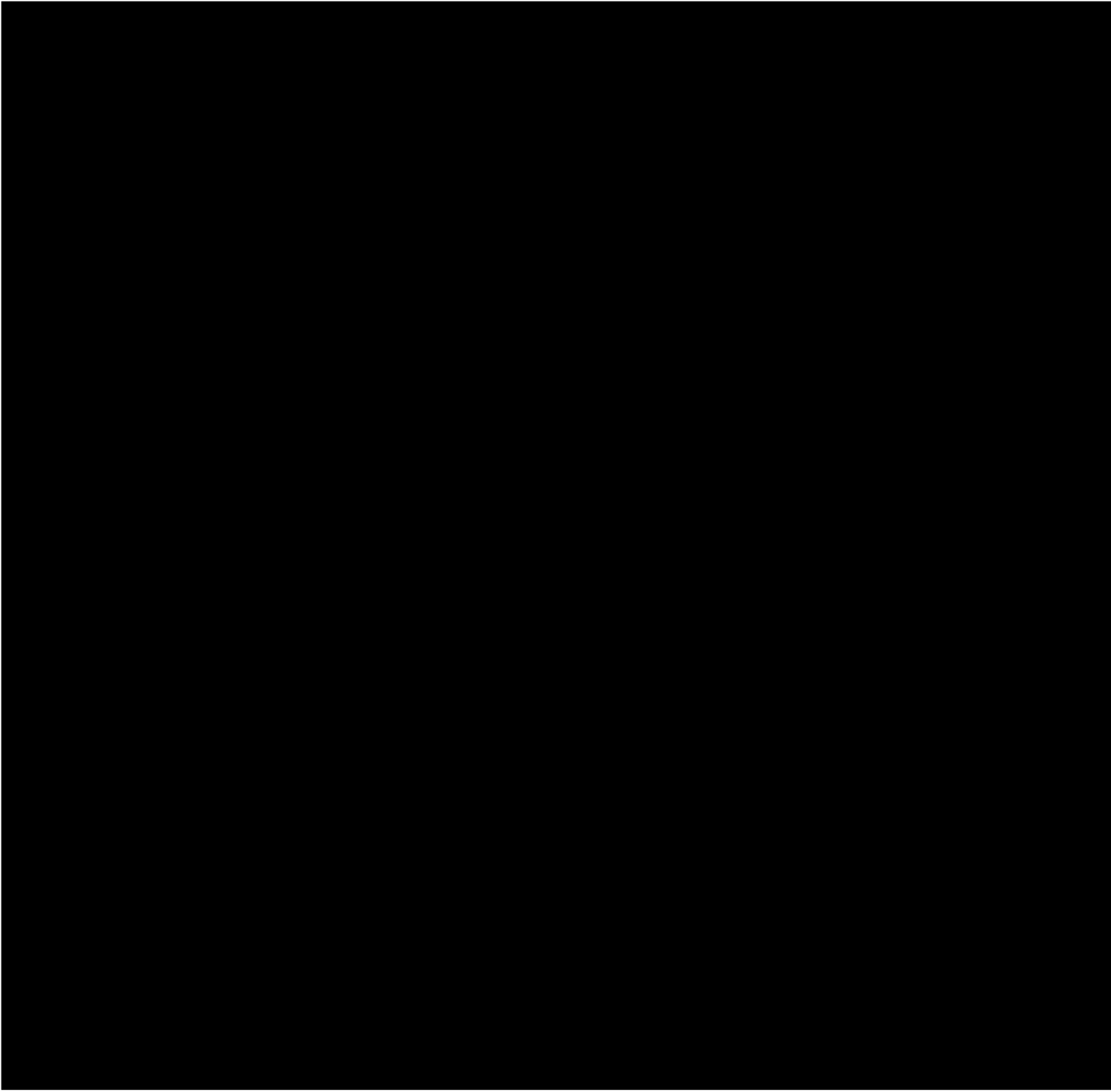




From: Martyn White <Martyn.White@arun.gov.uk>
Sent: 24 November 2021 15:41
To: Anita Gardner <Anita.Gardner@arun.gov.uk>
Subject: F/19/21/PL

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H M Ford Open Prison Ford Road Ford BN18 0BX

The construction of two houseblocks (two storeys) for 120 prisoners, extension to existing car park (80 spaces), proposed storage facilities & ancillary office space within secure perimeter fence at

HMP Ford Category D Prison. This application may affect the setting of a listed building & the site is in CIL Zone 2 (Zero Rated) as other development

A heritage assessment has been provided as part of the planning application which relates to both the built historic environment and archaeology. I have also undertaken my own desk-based assessment and undertaken a site visit. These comments relate to the built heritage environment only, separate comments should be sought from the council's archaeological advisor.

Whilst there are a number of heritage assets located in the local area, the two closest of relevance appear to be St Mary's Church and The Vicarage. These are located next to each other to the south of the prison site (or south of the eastern half of the complex).

The Parish Church of St Mary

The Parish Church of St Mary is a Grade 1 Listed medieval building, which is located within a defined churchyard, to the east of the Church Lane and south of the prison site. It is a cruciform building with tower to the south of the south transept. The tower and the doorway to the west of it late C12, the remainder early C13. There is also a south porch.

A review of historic mapping clearly demonstrates that the surrounds of the asset were predominantly fields along with a small group of buildings up until the C.20. However, it would appear that the opening of Ford Airfield in 1918, located to the northwest of the Church, represents a major change in the use of the surrounding landscape near to the church. During World War Two the airfield was part of 11 Group Fighter Command and by 1944 it was equipped with two runways and a variety of aircraft hangars. By 1960, Ford Prison had been constructed north of the Church and development had extended eastwards, towards the Church along Horsemere Green Road. By 1970, Ford Prison has expanded westwards onto the former Ford Airfield, and underwent further expansion in the 1990's.

Other development included the diversion of the principal route way through Climping (moved further to the west with the track next to the churchyard forming the relic of the earlier route) and the expansion of the settlement.

The current immediate setting of St Mary's Church is considered to be the walled churchyard that the building is located within, which is bordered by mature trees to the north, west and south. The border of mature trees (and neighbouring hall) screens the listed building from the surrounding modern development to the north and west, including the site covered by the current application. Whilst much of the wider historic landscape to the north/west have been removed by the aforementioned development, there are views out of the church yard are towards the east, overlooking a relatively flat undeveloped landscape currently consisting of horse paddocks and fields.

Due to the considerable development immediately to the north and west of St Mary's Church, and the current character of the site, the heritage statement concluded that it does not form part of the setting of the asset which contributes to its overall heritage significance. I agree with this opinion.

The Vicarage

The Vicarage is located adjacent to the Parish Church of St Mary and is a Grade II Listed Building. It is believed to have been constructed approximately in 1833 by the architect W F Pocock in a rudimentary Gothic style. The front elevation is cemented, whilst the sides are flints. It is two storeys with a hipped slate roof. Casement windows with obtusely pointed windows of the Gothic type. The centre window-bay projects with a crow-stepped gable over it, and there is a projecting

porch on ground floor of red brick grey headers with obtusely pointed archway. It is considered to be of architectural and historical significance.

Whilst the immediate setting of the building retains a sense of its original, being partially hidden from modern development by the property boundary wall and seen in association with the neighbouring church (Including its tower), the wider setting has been impacted upon through the modern, or more recent C.20 development.

World War II (WWII) Military Structures

As set out in the heritage statement, when the prison complex first opened in 1961 it utilised a number of the extant World War II (WWII) military structures. A number of these are still retained on site, including in one of the areas subject to the application (area A). Area A contains four structures which comprise remnants of the former accommodation huts. However, it is stated that these buildings, and those to the east, have been subject to notable change during the late 20th and early 21st century, and whilst their original form and purpose can be understood, due to the extent of alteration, these buildings are not considered to be of sufficient interest to warrant classification as non-designated heritage assets in the terms of the NPPF. It is clear that other examples of these buildings are also located in the western half of the prison complex, which act as a marker of the historical development of the airfield.

Other Designated Heritage Assets in the local area

With regard to the remainder of the designated heritage assets in the local area (such as Church Farmhouse East & West and Barn to the west of Nos. 1 and 2 Church Farm Cottage) it has been identified that there is no intervisibility between these assets and the areas of the proposed development. As a result, they are ruled out from further assessment as part of the application.

The Proposal

The proposal relates to the construction of two houseblocks (two storeys) for 120 prisoners, extension to existing car park (80 spaces), proposed storage facilities and ancillary office space within the secure perimeter fence. This development is covered in four different parts of the large prison site. The parcel of the application which is of relevance to the built historic assessment is 'Area A'.

As has already been identified, the proposal will require the loss of the former WWII buildings. However, these particular ones are identified as being in a poor state of repair and as a result are not good examples of their type. Further, it is noted that there are other examples within the prison complex and as a result are other reminders of the former use of the site nearby. Therefore, their loss is acceptable in this particular instance.

As has been previously identified, the closest designated heritage assets are the Grade I Listed church and Grade II Vicarage. Having viewed the church, and the vicarage from the lane and grassed area to their front it is clear that the intervening vegetation boundaries and the presence of the Church Hall to the north of the churchyard (between the asset and the Site) would mean that views of the proposed accommodation blocks from the north face of the Church, churchyard or vicarage would appear to be pretty limited, if possible at all.

It has been suggested that views in the direction of Area A (although not of the ground level) may become possible at times when the vegetation is not in full leaf. However, I am of the opinion that there would still be a degree of screening provided by the vegetation and intervening built form. This screening could be increased through the introduction of additional tree planting to the

immediate south of the buildings (I note that there is to be new trees planted to the west of the left block of accommodation). This could be provided for by way of condition if considered suitable.

The buildings proposed in area A would be located so that the gables of the buildings face southwards towards the heritage assets. They would be located amongst a small group of the prison buildings which range from one to two storeys in height. As a result, they would be seen within the context of the existing prison complex.

A site visit has ascertained that the existing buildings can be partially viewed when walking along the track towards the prison, and that at the very end, the location of the new accommodation buildings can be viewed. However, when looking back towards the assets it is not possible to view either the church or the vicarage. It is identified in the heritage statement that this would not result in a change that would cause harm to their overall significance, via a change in setting, and I am happy with this approach. It is therefore considered that the development will not impact the setting of both of the listed buildings, and as a consequence, there is no harm to the overall significance of the heritage assets.

Conclusion

It is concluded that the impact of the proposed development would result in no harm to the setting of the designated heritage assets, and therefore not harm their significance. As a consequence, the application 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 the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended).

Martyn White
Principal Conservation Officer,
Planning Services



Please note: I work on Conservation for half of the working week (all day Monday and Friday and Tuesday Afternoons)

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