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From: Martyn White <Martyn.White@arun.gov.uk> **On Behalf Of** Conservation Officer
Sent: 19 August 2025 17:10
To: Planning.Responses <Planning.Responses@arun.gov.uk>
Subject: F/19/25/OUT

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Land to the South of Ford Lane, Yapton, Arundel, BN18 0DF

Outline planning application with some matters reserved (except access) for up to 400 No dwellings, an 8-10 form entry secondary school with associated sports pitches and facilities, a community hub of up to 600 sqm, new pedestrian, cycle and vehicular access point onto from Ford Lane with additional secondary pedestrian/cycle access points will be provided throughout the site, allotments/community growing space, an orchard, country park, a sustainable urban drainage system and other formal public open space, landscaping and associated infrastructure.

Designated Heritage Assets

- The Grade I listed Parish Church of St Mary sits close to the western boundary of the Site
- The Grade II listed Manorial Dovecote at Church Farm is also located close to the Site boundary.
- Yapton – Church Lane Conservation Area

Non-Designated Heritage Assets

- The historic line of the Portsmouth and Arundel Canal runs along the south of the Site, outside of the Site boundary.
- Grove Lodge

The Parish Church of St Mary

The Parish Church of St Mary is a grade I Listed Building. It is located within the boundary of the Yapton: Church Lane Conservation Area and lies on the north-eastern edge of the built-up area of Yapton. The listed building description identifies that it is of chancel, nave with aisles and tower to the south-west of the nave. Nave and tower do to the C12 whilst the Chancel dates to the C.13. The nave has lean-to roofs with later dormer windows inserted. The tower has red brick buttresses and a hipped shingled roof. There are some additions including the quatrefoil windows in the south aisle around the 14th century and the west porch in the 15th century. It is considered to be a very attractive unrestored medieval church.

The Church derives its significance from its architectural, historical and archaeological interest. It is also of communal interest as a result of its function as a place of worship.

The setting of the church comprises its churchyard and the other nearby buildings that are within the conservation area, along with the lane to its front.

Whilst the church is largely screened from the countryside to the east, there are opportunities to view the tower from certain points in the surrounding countryside. The fields are therefore considered to form the agricultural context of not only the church but also the conservation area.

The clear line of mature trees which surround part of the conservation area are clearly visible from the fields to the north and east. They help to maintain a rural context and link the conservation area to the surrounding fields. This is in contrast to the areas of the rural-urban fringe around Yapton where there are opportunities to view what I would term modern development. The fields therefore have a beneficial contribution to the significance of the church and Conservation Area

Manorial Dovecote at Church Farm

The Manorial Dovecote at Church Farm is identified in the listing description as a circular structure of flint with red brick quoin-shaped pattern at regular intervals and cornice of three courses of brick. Conical tiled roof with hipped dormers. Cupola for bird entry missing. The small size of the dovecote indicates use solely for the Lord of the Manor. This dovecote appears to be identified in a lease dated 17 October 1667 for a 'capital messue with dove house, in Yapton'. It is considered to derive its significance from its architectural and historical interest.

The building is located within the garden of Church Farm, and it is within this area, along with the farm complex of Church farm that forms the setting. The site does form part of the historic rural setting of the listed building, however as identified in the heritage statement, there is no appreciation of this remaining due to the visual separation between the dovecote and its

surroundings. Overall, the dovecote is only appreciated from within its very immediate setting. Its wider setting, of which the Site forms part, makes no contribution to its significance.

Yapton: Church Lane Conservation Area

The Church Lane Conservation Area encompasses a small, tightly defined area centred around the church, containing a limited number of residential properties. It coincides with the location of the medieval village and includes two substantial early 19th-century houses, along with some cottages of similar age and formal character.

The conservation area retains a distinctly rural and traditional character. The built form is predominantly vernacular, with buildings generally set back from the road within individual plots, contributing to a spacious and informal layout. Mature trees within and around the area provide a green buffer, reinforcing its secluded and insular quality.

Boundary walls - primarily constructed of flint and varying in height - line the roadside and further define the individual plots, enhancing the sense of enclosure.

The layout places historic buildings in close proximity to more modern dwellings, including 20th-century houses and bungalows on the north side of Church Lane. While these newer properties contrast with the older built form, they are part of the established townscape.

Key views within the conservation area are focused on the churchyard, with the church serving as the central visual and cultural landmark. Views into and out of the conservation area are limited due to dense screening from mature trees, with appreciable views largely confined to Church Lane and Church Road.

It is considered that the conservation area derives its significance from its architectural and historical interest.

The Site adjoins the northern edge of the conservation area to the north of the church. There is an entrance/exit point from the conservation area at its northern corner, which opens out into the site. The experience of moving out of the conservation area is currently that of moving from the "enclosed, insular historic area to an open area of fields". This is however already undergoing change as a result of the Meadow Gardens development. The result of this development is that there is an increased urbanisation and development to this side of the conservation area.

There is a key view point looking toward the church tower from Ford Lane. This view also encompasses the very high brick wall that defines the boundary of the conservation area at this side, and the historic Church Farm House beyond with trees.

Overall, it is thought that the site provides a positive contribution to the conservation area as part of the remaining rural context. Of note is the open view from Ford Lane towards the northern boundary of the area. As the conservation area is so insular in character, setting as a whole provides only a minimal contribution to its significance, and as such the contribution made by the Site and the view from Ford Lane is very low.

Grove Lodge:

The building is thought to be the early-mid 19th century it has rendered elevation and as identified in the heritage statement utilises the typical Georgian regular spacing and symmetry within its fenestration. It has a hipped tiled roof. The building has been refurbished and modernised which has included replacement windows and an extension.

The building is visible from Church Road, as well as the immediate surroundings of the open playing fields to the east. However the more recent development has led to a much more developed setting, in particular to the west and south.

The site lies to the east of the non-designated heritage asset and is separated by the playing field and some agricultural land, dense hedgerows and tree lines which mark field boundaries. As identified in the heritage statement, the site forms part of the historic wider rural landscape that Grove Lodge originally sat within, however due to the intervening distance between the building and the site, it holds a lesser relationship with the lodge than the closer fields to its east. Whilst it makes a positive contribution to the setting of the asset, this is at a very low level.

Ford Canal

At the beginning of the 19th century the ever-present threat from enemy ships motivated the Government to construct an inland waterway from London making full use of the River Wey and the River Arun. An Act of Parliament, backed by the 3rd Lord Egremont of Petworth, was passed in 1818 to build a 12 mile stretch of canal to carry barges from the River Arun at Ford to Chichester Harbour at Salterns.

The remnants of the Portsmouth and Arundel Canal are important early C.19 historic features in the landscape of the coastal plain and are considered to warrant protection. They are a non-designated heritage asset. Policy HER DM5 of the adopted Local Plan states that development will be permitted where it would not adversely affect the remaining line and configuration of the Portsmouth and Arundel Canal and features along it.

The line of the canal runs to the immediate south of the site and forms an important reminder of the historical development of the area. Remnants of the canal survive across the former waterway's route including that element closest to the site.

Of interest is the remains of the Burndell Bridge survive to the west of the stretch. Albeit it is now enclosed by modern housing development

The former canal holds significance through the remaining appreciation of the historic route of the waterway, which is now used as a public foot and cycle path.

This section of the Towpath is mostly well-enclosed through dense tree coverage and hedging to the northern side in particular. The setting of this stretch of the former canal is varied and includes the site as well as modern housing to the south.

The Proposal

The proposal seeks outline planning permission for a mixed-use development comprising up to 400 dwellings, an 8–10 form entry secondary school with associated sports pitches and facilities, a community hub of up to 600 sqm, new pedestrian, cycle and vehicular access from Ford Lane, secondary pedestrian/cycle access points throughout the site, allotments and community growing space, an orchard, a country park, formal public open space, landscaping, and associated infrastructure.

St Mary's Church and the Conservation Area

The proposed development will include a large area of public open space which is shown as a country park on the plans. It is located in the western portion of the site and would take the form of an arcadian landscape which would be designed to have a more naturalistic appearance as opposed to a manicured public park.

The retention of open space along the western portion of the site will create a green buffer between the proposed built form and the adjacent heritage assets. Further, it will allow for views out of the conservation area to the north, as well as views towards the edge of the conservation area and the spire of St Mary's Church from Ford Lane. Albeit these views from the north will include what the heritage statement identifies as awareness of the new development.

The proposed development will reduce in density towards the western edge of the site, which will help soften the transition between built form and open space. This is a positive design response and should be retained through the detailed design stages.

It is understood that a sensitive material palette will be utilised to respond to the local context of the area. This would be key and should clearly reflect the local vernacular. This will be a key aspect of the scheme and must be clearly demonstrated and secured at reserved matters stage.

The introduction of built form within the site will alter its current rural character, as well as the relationship between the church and the conservation area and their historic open surroundings.

The mitigation measures including the buffer of the country park and the reduced density of development to the western side of the site, will allow the visibility of the northern edge of the conservation area and church spire to remain as existing. However, it is an important element of the mitigation, and I would not want to see such a feature diluted at reserved matters stage.

I note that the heritage statement considers that there would be harm this would be identified as less than substantial harm, and at the lower end as a result of development in their settings. I see no reason to disagree with this conclusion.

The Manorial Dovecote

The Manorial Dovecote is primarily experienced from within the immediate setting of Church Farm. The proposed built form would be located approximately 300–400 metres from the dovecote, with the school playing fields being the nearest element. These fields will remain open, albeit more formalised than the existing agricultural land. The elements of the dovecote's setting that contribute to its significance will remain unaltered, and its significance will therefore be preserved.

Grove Lodge

The layout and separation distance from Grove Lodge, combined with existing boundary hedging, will retain the semi-open character of the land to the east. As such, no harm is identified to the setting of this asset.

Portsmouth and Arundel Canal

The closest element of the site to the line of the Portsmouth and Arundel Canal would be the secondary school which would be located to the north of the former canal. The retention of existing trees and hedgerows along the canal boundary, along with the placement of playing fields to the north, will help maintain the open character of this part of the site, albeit in a more suburban context.

I note that the proposals involve the provision of new footpath links which, as noted in the heritage statement, "will improve pedestrian connection through the space and will link with the canal footpath". This would help to form part of a sustainable greenway which would follow the route of the canal and link up various settlements and development within the district. I note that this

approach is being followed in the neighbouring strategic development and see no reason why this approach cannot be followed here. This is positive as it will help to better reveal the significance of the historic feature, provide access to local heritage and ensure that it remains in a good state of repair.

It is recommended that any works to existing or proposed public footpaths be subject to a condition requiring details of hard and soft landscaping, lighting, and signage. These elements must be designed sensitively to respect the character and significance of nearby heritage assets.

General Comment:

Overall, I would want to ensure that the boundary trees and vegetation are maintained and enhanced throughout the site so as to ensure that helps to screen and soften the impact of any development, this is especially on the western half. Such an approach could have multiple benefits including to enhance biodiversity – subject to further input from the Council's Biodiversity Officer.

Conclusion

It is concluded that the impact of the proposed development would result in no harm to the setting of the non- designated heritage assets, and therefore not harm their significance. However, some harm has been found to the designated heritage assets as a result of development in their setting. The impact can be described as causing less than substantial harm in accordance with paragraph 215 of the NPPF (2024). The level of harm is considered to be on the lower end of the scale. As such, you will also need to consider the public benefits that the development may achieve as part of your assessment of the application, along with the contents of section 66 & 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended).

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