

Zoe Toppin

From: Anita Gardner
Sent: 04 September 2020 16:18
To: Planning.Responses
Subject: FW: LU/214/20/PL

Please scan as a consultee response

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From: Martyn White <Martyn.White@arun.gov.uk>
Sent: 04 September 2020 16:11
To: Anita Gardner <Anita.Gardner@arun.gov.uk>
Subject: LU/214/20/PL

LU/214/20/PL

The application site is located within the heart of the town and adjoins the Littlehampton: East Street Conservation Area. There also a number of Listed buildings in close proximity to the site, along with a locally Listed Building or Structure of Character (non-designated heritage asset).

The application includes a heritage statement in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 189 of the NPPF, along with a detailed Design and Access Statement. These documents, along with my own review of the site boundary has identified the following heritage assets:

- Littlehampton: East Street Conservation Area
- Avon House
- Garden Wall fronting Avon House
- The Old House
- East Street School (Youth Centre)
- Low Wall in front of East Street School
- 39, East Street
- Farm Buildings to West of Rear of No. 39 East Street
- Vine House
- 69 high street and 1 east street

These shall be discussed in turn:

Avon House

Avon House and the garden all which fronts on to Avon House are both Grade II Listed. Avon House is identified as being a good example of an early C19 simple symmetrical vernacular residential cottage. The cottage and the

associated walling are now located within an urban location with a mixture of uses, higher density development and local roads which are busy (especially during the rush hour periods). Modern development in the form of the application site are considered to detract from the setting of the building.

Both the cottage and the wall are of architectural and historic interest, being rare survivors of the early development of the town.

The Old House

The Old House is also grade II Listed Building which is illustrative of the development of the town, It is a large 18C building with a symmetrical front elevation. It is constructed using local materials in a vernacular appearance. It is suggested that it is a rare example of a large upper-class residences that were constructed in the local area to cater for the growing population of Littlehampton which transformed it to an important seaside resort.

Whilst the immediate setting of the building is maintained by a boundary flint and brick wall, the wider setting of the building has been harmed through the presence of modern development in the form of the application site and the busy road network which immediately adjoins the garden space.

The Old House is considered to be of architectural significance.

East Street School & Low Wall to the front of it.

Both assets have been listed as Grade II. The school fronts on to East Street and forms an imposing building to the street. It is constructed using local materials in a 'gothic' style.

The building is a good example of a late 19C school building which was constructed for the growing town and is therefore of architectural significance. Its historic significance stems from the fact that it remains as an education establishment.

The school building is surrounded by a mixture of properties, especially the 18C Listed Buildings discussed here, as well as some 19C buildings, including the terraces opposite the school. However, the southern part of the application site is visible from the site when looking westwards. This site detracts from the view.

39, East Street (The Old Farm) and associated Farm Buildings

Both the farm house and the associated farm buildings are considered to be of architectural interest as an early 18th century farm complex with a strong vernacular character and form. The farm house is of two storeys with a tiled pitched roof featuring a number of chimney stacks of varying age and styles. The house has development in many stages, as evidenced through the eastern elevation, where the oldest part of the house is clearly different in appearance from the later developments on both the northern and southern sides.

The farm buildings are generally more simpler in appearance, being of flint and brick construction. Later development has an impact upon these farm buildings. However, it is considered that the complex is still of architectural significance. Likewise, the age and use mean that the complex is also of historical interest.

The complex is surrounded by modern development and the busy road network previously identified. Part of the development site is visible from the farmhouse and buildings when looking northwards.

Vine House

Vine House is listed Grade II building and sits opposite the southern boundary of the site. Two storeys in height with a tiled pitched roof and two brick side stacks. The building is of three bays with the central bay featuring a later, yet attractive projecting pointed porch enclosing the main entrance. Constructed in traditional materials with knapped flint and red brick, the building is of simple character, reflecting its age and domestic function with sash windows to the ground and first floors set within flush timber frames. These appear to be later openings with some remains of earlier openings existing within the outer bays, infilled with knapped flint. The building presents some later Gothic features representing the increased popularity of this style in its application to domestic buildings.

The building sits within an urban context of high-density development and busy roads. The application site is visible when viewing the front elevation of the building, and at present it detracts from its setting. For the reasons above, along with its age mean that the building is of both architectural and historic interest.

69 High Street and 1 East Street

69 high street and 1 east street is a mid-to-late C18, three storeyed building, which is located on the corner of East Street and the High Street. It forms the transition between the town centre and the historic development of East Street. It is currently used as a shop/estate agents. The building is considered to be of historical importance. The development site can be viewed when looking northwards towards the building and along the street.

The Conservation Area

The extended setting of the listed building is principally formed of the historic collection of buildings which comprise the Littlehampton East Street Conservation Area and line the north and part of the south sides of Church Street. The buildings vary in construction date, ranging from the early 18th century church and cottages to the 19th and early 20th century villas and terraces, however they are of a commensurate scale and form and many share a commonality of materials, creating a high quality consistent historic townscape. The buildings also form an important intact collection illustrating a key historic development phase of the town which has otherwise been subject to large areas of piecemeal re-development.

The site

The former supermarket building does not relate positively in character and form with the surrounding built characteristics of the conservation area.

It is architecturally significant and forms a large part of the street-scene; it is visible at the junction between East Street, Church Street and Anchor Springs. It plays a dominant role, which is enhanced through the large areas of brick and tiled elevations.

The Proposal

The demolition of the existing building would remove what is considered to be a large obtrusive building which harms the settings of some of the assets. Therefore, the demolition of the existing building and the concept of redeveloping the site can be seen to be a positive impact.

Paragraph 200 of the NPPF states that the “Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

In this instance, any new development is required to respect the scale, character, materials and heritage of the local area.

The proposed development is divided up into a number of elements; three buildings, two of which would be located in the area covered by the existing supermarket building, and the third one over the car park; an area of open space; and car parking for the future residents.

The design of the buildings is modern in appearance, which, is generally acceptable as long as the quality of the materials used, detailing and references to the local vernacular can be clearly identified within the scheme.

Further, the concept of splitting the existing large (and ugly) looking building into two smaller buildings does seem to be more appropriate, especially where the development is able to relate more to the neighbouring streets. Likewise, the concept of the central area of open space is a positive introduction to the local area, which is currently focused on areas of tarmac hardstanding as opposed to usable community space.

It is also interesting to note in the statements that influences have been taken extensively from the gables of the existing buildings in the conservation area, and that the proposed materials are based on an assessment of the local area.

Whilst it would seem that a lot of thought has gone into the design process, which is to be commended, I do have some concerns which make the proposal problematic.

Whilst the reference to the use of gables is noted, it is not fully clear how the remainder of the proposal reflects the local vernacular in terms of the building form, materials, design and detailing in a contemporary and innovative way. For instance, the block fronting East Street and the conservation area appears out of keeping with the buildings in the local area in terms of its configuration, massing, form, and fenestration treatment

Continuing the theme of the proposed materials, whilst the use of red bricks in the development is understood (it is found throughout the local area), I do not understand how the use of the yellow bricks relates to traditional development in the local area. If flint is to be used to inform the development (as suggested), then other brick/building material colours would be more appropriate.

Whilst the proposal introduces variations in building line and height in order to reduce the impact, I am concerned that the 3 storey elements of the buildings will appear overbearing in relation to the street scenes, especially in Franciscan Way, Avon Road and East Street. This is also detrimental to the settings of the Conservation Area and some of the Listed Buildings (such as Avon House)

The proposed parking opposite Avon House is also a concern as it will compromise its setting. Could this area be used as some form of landscaping instead?

Conclusion

Whilst the current proposal is an improvement on the previously refused scheme it is still problematical. As prepared, the proposal cannot be said to not cause harm, and therefore is such that the impact can be described as causing less than substantial harm in accordance with paragraph 196 of the NPPF (2019). 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 the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended).

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

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