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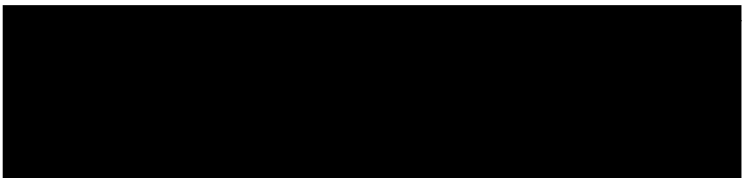
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Y/105/19/PL & Y/106/19/L

Stakers Farm is a Listed Building, and as a consequence, the buildings subject to the current proposal are curtilage listed. The farmhouse itself is an early C19 building of two storeys and attic with two dormers. It is Stuccoed and has a stringcourse. The roof is tiled, and there is a later C19 square stuccoed porch. It is very similar in appearance to Yew Tree House.

The barns which are the subject of this proposal are attractive, well-mannered buildings which through their design and location relate directly to the main listed building. The majority of the barns focus around an attractive courtyard which lies directly behind the farmhouse.

There are also a number of other listed buildings in the local area, including Yew Tree House, The Homestead and Berri Court. Yew Tree House is an early C19, detached building which is faced with stucco and a later C19 square porch.

The application site is located within the Yapton: Church Land and Main Road Conservation Area where there is a close-knit pattern of development.

The Conservation Area is based on Main Road and the southern end of Church Road. The village developed along this principal route and, together with Church Road and North End Road, there is a wide variety in the age and style of buildings. Most are two-storey in brick and flint or stucco, and these, together with natural slate or plain clay tiles for the roofs, are the predominant materials in the area.

The contrast between road fronted development and large residences, e.g. Dyers Croft and Berri Court set in their own grounds, also contributes to the special character of the area

Boundary walling, mainly in flint, and mature landscaping enhance the street scenes and are important features and contribute to the rural character of the Conservation Areas. Chimneys are also important features on the skyline. Mature landscaping including many substantial trees and tree groups, enhance the rural character of this area, the setting of the buildings and the street scenes.

Proposal

The proposal is for the conversion of, and alterations to, existing barns to create 3 dwellings, along with the erection of car barns, a store, a replacement pump house, demolition of a C20 barn and associated landscaping and parking.

The concept of the conversion of the existing barn structures is considered to be acceptable as it will ensure that the buildings are put to a good use, as opposed to remaining empty as they currently are. The proposed use will ensure that they are suitably maintained and remain as heritage assets.

Having undertaken a site visit it is clear that some parts of the barn to be converted into unit one retains some attractive features, especially within the two-storey element. These features are some of the most attractive within the barns. These features include flint flooring, exposed brick walls, timber ceiling and stall dividers. The proposed plans indicate that this area is to be sub-divided up into smaller areas/rooms with a new staircase, yet it is not clear how these important features are to be retained.

Likewise, in building one, it is noted that an elevation will be altered in order to expose the previous cart barn openings. Such a proposal is generally acceptable, but the design of the new elevation, which includes excessive amounts of glazing, should have a simple framed emphasis and be recessed as far as possible to allow a deep shadow line. Such an approach also minimises reflections to reduce the visual prominence of the glazing. This technique can also help to maximise light penetration into the interior. Details of the fenestration along this section of the elevation should be carefully considered in order to ensure that they do not dominate the elevation.

It is not clear how historic features including exposed roof trusses will be treated as part of the proposal.

It is noted that the proposals will generally utilise existing openings for windows and doors. Such an approach is positive. However, it is noted that existing doors (or replacements) are not to be incorporated as part of the final scheme. This is unfortunate, as they retain character as part of the building, and are reminders of previous use. Where doors remain, they can be retained and used as shutters; doors can be fixed open in order to ensure that enough light is available to the interior of the building. If in a poor state of repair, they can be repaired or replicated.

There is some concern regarding the amount of rooflights proposed. Are so many necessary?

It is not fully clear what the proposed joinery will look like. It is recommended that they should not be stock doors/windows from a joinery catalogue as these are generally too "domestic" in style, and out of character with the original purpose of the building. As mentioned, glazing and frames should be deeply recessed in order to reduce reflections and visual impact.

Likewise, it is noted that the building referred to as 'barn 3' is to include bi-folding doors. Such a feature is not normally associated with a barn and cannot be supported here. It is suggested that an alternative approach be considered which would result in the loss of less historic fabric, and a more appropriate design.

The landscaping proposals which result in the sub-division of the courtyard are of concern, as it would result in the loss of an important feature of the barn complex. The proposals also appear to transform this courtyard area into

rear gardens with excessive fencing and hedging. This approach is considered to be out of character with the original courtyard and removes the relationship with the neighbouring farmhouse.

The use of brick pavements is also of concern, as this could introduce a sub-urban character into what should be a more rural one. From looking at the site plan it would appear that a significant area of the site would be paved in order to provide access to a rear parking courtyard. It is not clear why such a large area or location was identified for the parking and therefore the hardstanding. Please can this be confirmed?

Details of the location of any gas/electricity metres should be provided, in order to ensure that a discrete location and design is identified.

The loss of the C20 building will have a positive impact in that it will allow the setting of the building to be enhanced.

Details of the proposed joinery will need to be provided to the council by way of condition. The windows/doors will need to be set back within the openings so that they are not flush and create shadow lines. They should also be of a simple design/appearance. Stairs should be robust in detail with plain newels and balusters to reflect the character of the barn

Likewise, details of all of the proposed materials will be required, along with details of the brick bond and any external colours/surface treatments to be used.

Conclusion

At present there are a number of concerns with the proposal as submitted which it is considered would have a negative impact on the heritage assets, and cause harm. This level of harm would be classed as 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).

For your information, the Planning Practice Guidance states that public benefits include:

- sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting
- reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset
- securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long-term conservation



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