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From: Martyn White <Martyn.White@arun.gov.uk>

Sent: 29 April 2022 15:41

To: Planning.Responses <Planning.Responses@arun.gov.uk>; Simon Davis <Simon.Davis@arun.gov.uk>

Subject: Y/3/22/OUT

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Land West of Bilsham Road Yapton

Hybrid Application comprising of Full application for Phase 1 for 30 No residential dwellings, new access from Bilsham Road, public open space, landscaping, sustainable urban drainage and associated works; and Outline planning application for further phases of up to 110 No dwellings and associated infrastructure (with all matters reserved).

A map-based exercise has identified that the site itself does not contain any built heritage assets, nor is it located within a conservation area. I note that a comprehensive heritage assessment has been prepared which uses a 1km search radius to identify built heritage assets that have the potential to be affected by the proposed development via changes to their settings.

Four Grade II listed buildings have been identified by both myself and the heritage assessment with potential to be affected by the proposed development as a result of changes in their settings, these being:

- Old Bilsham Farmhouse - Grade II Listed Building
- The Chapel - Grade II Listed Building
- Bilsham Manor and Manor Cottage - Grade II Listed Building
- Hobbs Farmhouse - Grade II Listed Building

Old Bilsham Farmhouse

Old Bilsham Farmhouse is located to the south-west of the Site and accessed via Bilsham Lane. It is Grade II listed and is thought to be of C.18 origins. The building is L shaped in plan and two storeys and attic with the attic storey having dormer windows. It is faced with knapped flints and red brick dressings, quoins and string course. The roof is gabled and covered with plain tiles. The majority of the windows are timber casements of varying sizes. The building has been altered, remodelled, and extended during the late C.20. This included the construction of a large conservatory, conversion of some of the barn spaces, construction of a swimming pool and the loss of the courtyard into garden space. whilst these modern alterations diminish somewhat the ability to understand the former agricultural function of the building, they do not detract from the significance of the listed building. It is considered to be of architectural and historic significance.

The immediate setting of the building is made up of the plot within which it is located and area of the lane to its immediate frontage. The wider setting of the heritage asset is made up of the surrounding agricultural landscape, as well as the other properties within the Bilsham. Visual connection between this wider setting and the asset itself is however very limited, with only glimpses of the asset possible from a small part of the Site. Whilst this wider setting includes the site, it only plays a very minor role in its significance.

The Chapel

Bilsham Chapel is a Grade II Listed Building, which is also accessed via Bilsham Lane. The building was constructed in the C.14 as a Chapel of ease and is constructed in flint and sandstone with red brick quoins and window dressings. Most of the windows within the building are identified as being modern replacements, with the exception being the fifteenth century east window which is a pointed two light window. It has a tiled gabled roof. The building is two storeys in height with dormers and skylights, along with a more recent extension.

The building has not been used as a Chapel since around the sixteenth/seventeenth centuries. Following on from the original intended use, the building has been used as two workers cottages and then a cow shed. It was converted into a single dwelling in the 1970s, which required that a number of alterations were undertaken in order to accommodate the residential use.

Despite the later residential conversion, the original function of the building as a C14 chapel can still clearly be appreciated and understood. As a result, the building is considered to be of architectural and historical significance. It is also identified as being of historic communal interest, as a result of it being a former Chapel of Ease in the C14-16. This is mostly derived from the physical fabric of the building itself

The immediate setting of the building is made up of the small plot which it occupies, within which there are some outbuildings. This plot has been altered since its original construction, with it no longer having a churchyard but instead a residential garden. Whilst this does remove some of the ability to appreciate the building as a chapel, the garden does make an aesthetic contribution to the significance of the asset.

The wider setting consists of the neighbouring properties within Bilsham (the historical area the chapel would have served), along with the wider agricultural landscape, which "places the asset within its rural and comparatively isolated setting". The heritage assessment identifies that there are only glimpses of the roof line of the building from the Site, and from here the history of the building and its former use as a Chapel of Ease is not discernible. As a result, whilst the site is a part of this wider landscape and therefore does make a small contribution to the overall significance of the asset, it makes a minor contribution towards the significance of the building.

Bilsham Manor and Manor Cottage

Bilsham Manor and Manor Cottage is a Grade II listed building which dates to the C.17/C.18: The north wing is C.17 in date and is two storeys in height with red brick walls largely obscured by ivy. The roof is tiled and hipped. To the rear of this range there are later additions and extensions. The windows are timber casements of varying sizes.

The south wing is C.18 and is much more formal in design: the property is stuccoed and the roof is hipped and covered with slate. The windows are timber sashes and the central door has a flat roofed open porch. Whilst also being two storeys, it is taller in elevation. The C.18 range represents a movement away from the more vernacular inspired architecture. The building is considered to be of architectural and historic significance as a result the changing architectural styles. As noted in the heritage statement, the significance of the listed building is derived principally from the fabric of the building, and when viewed within its immediate setting.

The immediate setting consists of its large plot which includes a range of outbuildings (some also now converted), landscaped gardens, and other domestic features, as well as the lane to its side/front. The immediate setting therefore makes a positive contribution to the understanding of the asset as part of a range of buildings, and therefore contributes to the significance.

The wider setting is made up of the nearby properties in Bilsham, and also the wider agricultural landscape, of which the site is a part. Whilst the site is located within the wider setting of the building, and therefore makes a positive contribution to its significance, as noted in the heritage statement, there are only glimpsed views available of it with very little understanding of the scale or importance of the building.

Hobbs Farmhouse

Hobbs Farmhouse is a Grade II listed C.18, double pile, detached house of two storeys. The building is stuccoed (and painted) with a tiled roof; the main wing is gables and the rear wing is hipped. Mostly painted timber casements. It is interesting to note that the Victoria County History states 'Hobbs Farmhouse, called Bilsham Farm c. 1875 and evidently the true manor house of Bilsham manor, was erected in or shortly before 1718. The front, or principal elevation is orientated away from the site, facing southwards.

The building is of historical and architectural interest. I also note that the heritage statement identifies that the building also has a high level of aesthetic interest. Its significance is principally embodied within its built form.

The immediate setting of the listed building is made up of the surrounding (former) farm buildings, and the existing garden spaces, which set it within its agricultural surrounds and provide its context as a former farmhouse. The wider setting of the asset is made up of the rural agricultural fields which surrounds it, including the site.

Intervisibility between the building and the site is very limited (due to vegetation and orientation of the farmhouse), and as a consequence, the site only makes a very minor contribution to the asset's significance.

The Proposal

The proposals for the Site comprise a hybrid application for residential development and associated infrastructure. I note that as part of this application phase 1 of the development is provided as a full planning application for 30 residential dwellings, new access from Bilsham

Road, public open space, landscaping, sustainable urban drainage and associated works. Phases two and onwards are provided as an outline planning application for up to a further 110 dwellings.

I note that an Illustrative Landscape Masterplan has been provided for the entire of the site which shows that development would be concentrated to the northern parts which would leave the southern part of the (that which is closest to the listed buildings) as an area of green open space, with new woodland and tree planting. Paragraph 4.2 of the Heritage statement also states that whilst outside of the red line boundary, the area to the immediate south of the site could be retained as a separate biodiversity improvement area, which would further maintain a landscape buffer between the listed buildings and new built form within the developed site. This area appears to be shown identified with a blue line boundary. If this area is not located within the red line boundary, could this proposal be enforced if not provided?

As the proposed development would not directly affect any built historic fabric, the consideration lies with whether the significance of the heritage assets could be harmed by changes within their settings, i.e. the surroundings in which they are experienced.

As has been identified within the heritage statement, it is best to group the listed buildings by location and discuss them by their grouping as opposed to potentially repeating the same assessment a number of times. The first group consists of those listed buildings on Bilsham Lane

Listed Buildings on Bilsham Lane

As the immediate settings for all three of the listed buildings is within their garden areas or the lane outside of this, it is considered that the proposed development (which is located to the north) would not impact upon the way in which the listed buildings are experienced or appreciated in this context.

Whilst the principal elevations of the listed buildings either front onto, or are visible from Bilsham lane, they can be viewed against the backdrop of gardens, whilst also being surrounded by wider agricultural land. This agricultural land, which can be viewed from the lane, forms the wider settings of the assets, and allows the significance of the properties to be fully appreciated and understood as historic rural buildings. Longer distance views to the north of Bilsham Lane vary along its length due to differential levels of roadside planting, but there are some glimpsed views towards the southern boundary of the biodiversity improvement area at a number of points (as noted in the heritage statement, the Site boundary itself is set back from this boundary further to the north).

The Illustrative Landscape Masterplan identifies that the proposed housing would accommodate approximately 75% of the red site area (my estimate) and would be located to the north, which would leave a large area of land to the southern part as green open space. This open space would include an attenuation pond and new tree and woodland planting. Such planting should be located on the southern boundary of the redline site in order to soften the development into the surrounding countryside. The proposed planting would mature with time, and along with the location of the housing would mean that this would limit any intervisibility with the listed buildings in Bilsham/hamlet of Bilsham.

Outside of the red line boundary, but to the immediate south of the site, further land is identified as biodiversity improvement area. The heritage statement notes that it would remain free of any new built form and maintain the landscape buffer between the new houses and the listed buildings to the south along Bilsham Lane. I also note that the existing southern boundary of this area is identified with existing vegetation, which could be sensitively enhanced as part of this element of the scheme. However, if the land is not within the red line, would it be possible to require that the land was used as such?

As noted in the heritage statement, the principal changes which would be experienced within the wider settings of the listed buildings as a result of the transformation of agricultural land to the north as a biodiversity improvement area, rather than by direct views of new housing. Appropriate boundary planting to the Site could additionally soften the appearance of new housing as part of the wider, semi-rural surroundings of Yapton. I also note that the landscape assessment notes that the four Listed Buildings in Bilsham (to the south of the Site) fall on the edge of the Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI), however, any potential views from these heritage assets are largely prevented by their aspect and/or both existing and proposed intervening vegetation, and in any event would at worst be limited to a glimpse of the proposals seen past the intervening vegetation.

Subject to detailed landscaping proposals, it is considered that the minor visual changes which could arise from the proposed development to the wider settings of the listed buildings would have a neutral effect upon the settings of the listed buildings. Such changes would not affect the way in which the properties are currently experienced and understood, as a small group of historic rural properties. As a result, their significance would be maintained by the proposed development. It is suggested though, that more mature vegetation is planted so as to help speed up the impact that it would have in screening any visible elements of the development.

Hobbs Farmhouse

As identified, the wider setting of the farmhouse is made up of the agricultural landscape. These fields provide a degree of isolation and allow for an understanding of the property within its historical, rural context. Whilst the site forms part of this wider setting intervisibility between it and the listed building is very limited due to intervening vegetation and the orientation of the farmhouse.

The heritage statement identifies that the proposed development would likely result in a degree of change to the wider setting of Hobbs Farmhouse, arising from the changes brought about to the character of the previously undeveloped agricultural field which comprises the Site. I see no reason to disagree with this.

The section of the land identified by the red line (the site) which is located closest to the farmhouse would be retained as an area of green space. The new tree and woodland planting which the illustrative landscape plan indicates that would be provided would mature with time and help to screen the development further. Likewise, the proposed/potential biodiversity improvement area would further assist to maintain a suitable landscape buffer between new development and Hobbs Farmhouse. This would require the appropriate reinforcement of the boundary planting along Bilsham Road.

Subject to detailed landscaping proposals the minor visual changes which could arise from the proposed development to the wider settings of Hobbs Farmhouse, would have a neutral impact upon the setting of the listed building. The changes would not affect the way in which the building is currently experienced and understood, and such, the special interest of the listed building would be preserved by the proposed development. It is suggested that more mature vegetation is planted so as to help speed up the impact that it would have in screening any visible elements of the development.

Other Issues/Points to note

I will leave others to assess how the proposed design of the houses or their proposed materials such as full clad elevations, and pale coloured bricks match the local vernacular of red/orange brick, flint, clay tile hanging on elevations and clay tiles and slate roofs.

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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