

Land at Bird in Eye Farm, South of Bird in Eye Hill, Uckfield

Application Statement—Built Heritage

JCH01067
Heritage Statement
Croudace Homes Ltd & Mr & Mr Berry
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by the RPS Group, on behalf of Croudace Homes Ltd & Mr & Mrs Berry to assess the likely impact of the proposed development of land at Bird in Eye Farm, South of Bird in Eye Hill, Uckfield on the historic built environment. The site consists predominantly of pasture. It comprises approximately 41 hectares (101 acres) to the west of Uckfield and its surrounds, but does not include, the group of buildings that comprise Bird in Eye Farm which lies within the centre of the northern half of the site.

The development proposals comprise an outline planning application for up to 290 dwellings, associated landscaping, informal open space and strategic SANG, with access from the B2102. The appearance, landscaping, layout and scale of the proposals are reserved matters.

The site lies to the south of Bird in Eye Hill (B2102) but is adjacent to the road along a short stretch only, near to the existing entrance to Bird in Eye Farm, and comprises two sections. The northern section, to the east and west of Bird in Eye Farm and the southern section, which comprises two fields to the south of Bird in Eye Shaw, a linear stretch of woodland that extends from the Framfield Stream, eastwards to Hailwell Farm, and east of Nightingale Copse in the west. Development is proposed in the northern section and the southern element of the site would be designated as strategic SANG. Within the northern section the western boundary of the site runs along the route of Framfield Stream, just to the west of the Uckfield Hospital. The eastern boundary lies adjacent to Hailwell Farm Bungalow with Hailwell Farm to its south east corner. A small part of the northern site boundary runs along Bird in Eye Hill, with part of this boundary immediately to the south of the houses along Bird in Eye Hill to the west of the farm entrance and to the east, the boundary runs along a field boundary to the south of Lantern House. The southern section of the site, to the south of Bird in Eye Shaw, comprises two fields and a section of woodland at the southern end of Nightingale Copse. This section is surrounded by fields or hedgerows and has no frontage to the highway. It is encircled by woodland and hedges.

There are no buildings or structures within the site. Bird in Eye Farm, is located within the centre of the northern section of the site, but outside the red site boundary, and it contains a number of structures associated with the farm and a number of other buildings which are occupied by non agricultural businesses. Access into the farmyard is via a tarmac driveway from Bird in Eye Hill.

This report has been prepared to support the application proposals. It addresses the requirement under Paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which requires the applicant to explain the



Figure 1: The view from the west of Bird in Eye Farm, within the site, looking south east towards The Oast and the associated farm buildings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

significance of the particular heritage assets likely to be affected by development and to demonstrate the way in which the development proposals may have an impact on that significance.

There is one listed building within the Bird in Eye Farm group. The Oast is listed Grade II and is located in the centre of the group of buildings that comprise Bird in Eye Farm, with an open aspect to the west half of the site on its west elevation. To the east of the proposed strategic SANG in the southern section of the site there are two listed buildings, Framfield Place and the Stables to the West of Framfield Place. There is a cluster of seven further listed structures to the east of Framfield Place, around the junction of Brookhouse Lane, The Street, Framfield and the B2102, north to Uckfield and the Church of St Thomas a Becket. It is considered that The listed buildings within Framfield, around the junction of the roads at the entrance into the village from the north and west, are too distant and separated by intervening fields and woodland and hedgerows to include the site within their settings. Framfield Place and the Stables to the west of Framfield Place are sited to the east of the southern section of the site and so it may be considered that they could include that part of the site within their settings.

There are further buildings within the Bird in Eye farm yards which appear to date from the early 19th century but which could be earlier, and possibly date from the late 18th century. These are much altered and not statutorily listed. Given their age and group value in association with The Oast, it is necessary to assess whether these buildings should be considered as local heritage assets and assessed as undesignated heritage assets within the context of paragraph 197 of the NPPF.

This assessment makes reference to the relevant legislative framework contained within the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as well as national and local planning policy. In addition, relevant Historic England guidance has been consulted to inform the judgements made. It is further based on the findings of detailed historical research, a site walkover survey and assessment conducted from within the site and publicly accessible locations around the site, map studies and the application of professional judgement.

The findings of this report are based on the known conditions at the time of writing and all findings and conclusions are time limited to no more than three years from the date of this report. All maps, plans and photographs are for illustrative purposes only.



2.0 LEGISLATIVE & PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

2.1 LEGISLATION & NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY & GUIDANCE

The statutory requirements and national and local policy provide a clear framework for the consideration of development proposal that affect the historic built environment. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (PLBCA), provides the overarching statutory requirements in the determination and assessment of development proposals in the historic environment. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's policies and requirements at a national level and the Planning Practice Guidance reflects the Secretary of State's views on the way policy should be applied. It is acknowledged that matters of legal interpretation are determined in the Courts but the NPPF and the Practice Guidance set out clearly the Government's priorities and aspirations for planning nationally. The Historic England documents provide technical advice that is designed to explain and assist in the implementation of legislation and national policy. Therefore there is a clear hierarchy of statutory duty, policy and best practice and this has been used to inform the assessment of the application proposals that is included in this statement.

Legislation

The relevant legislation that relates to the setting of heritage assets is contained in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 66(1) sets out the duty of the planning authority with regard to the determination of applications for development that may affect the setting of a listed building. It states that;

In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

This requirement means there is an implicit acknowledgement that although a development proposal may not affect the physical fabric of a listed building, it is possible to affect its character as a building of architectural or historic interest through development that may be located within its setting.

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, February 2019)

The NPPF is the principal document that sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It explains that the purpose of the planning system is support and deliver sustainable development. The Framework describes this as *meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*. In order to achieve this, the planning system has three overarching objectives. These are an economic objective, to help build a strong and competitive economy, a social objective to support strong and healthy communities and an environmental objective which seeks to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.

The NPPF states that these objectives are interdependent but should be pursued in mutually supportive ways and paragraph 9 explains that these *objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in this Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged*. Paragraph 11 emphasises that the Framework means that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Section 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment relates to the conservation of heritage assets in the production of local plans and decision taking. It emphasises that heritage assets are *an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance*.

In the case of proposals that may affect the significance of a heritage asset, paragraph 189 requires applicants to identify and describe the significance of those heritage assets, together with the contribution that may be made by their setting to that significance. The level of detail provided should be proportionate to the significance of the heritage assets affected. This is supported by paragraph 190, which requires local planning authorities to take this assessment into account when considering applications.

Within the section titled *Considering potential impacts*, the NPPF emphasises that *great weight* should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, irrespective of whether any potential impact equates to total loss, substantial harm or less than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage assets.

Paragraph 195 states that where a development would result in substantial harm to, or total loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset, permission should be refused, unless this harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits, or a number of criteria are met. Where less than

substantial harm is identified, paragraph 196 requires this harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposed development.

Paragraph 200 notes that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites 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, or better reveal the significance of, the asset should be treated favourably.

Furthermore, paragraph 201 states that not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. When determining the impact that may arise from the loss of a building or element that does contribute positively to the conservation area, consideration should be given to the relative significance of that building and the impact on the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.

National Guidance

The Government published the Practice Guidance to accompany the NPPF policies in November 2016. It has been updated to reflect changes to the NPPF since this date.

The guidance states that the protection and enhancement of the historic environment is an important part of national policy to achieve sustainable development. It emphasises that the appropriate conservation of heritage assets forms one of the 'Core Planning Principles' of the NPPF that underpin the planning system.

The guidance states that the historic environment is an irreplaceable resource and that effective conservation of heritage assets will deliver wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits. Conservation is defined within the guidance as,

an active process of maintenance and managing change. It requires a flexible and thoughtful approach to get the best out of assets as diverse as listed buildings in every day use to as yet undiscovered, undesignated buried remains of archaeological interest. (paragraph 3). The guidance sets out to explain how proposals can avoid or minimise harm to the significance of a heritage asset or the wider historic environment. It states that a clear understanding of the significance of a heritage asset and its setting is necessary to develop proposals which avoid or minimise harm. Early appraisals, or specialist investigation can help to identify constraints and opportunities arising from the asset and such studies

can reveal alternative development options, for example more sensitive designs or different orientations, that will deliver public benefits in a more sustainable and appropriate way. (paragraph 19)

2.1 LEGISLATION & NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY & GUIDANCE

It is crucial that the significance of a heritage asset is understood and consideration of this incorporated into decision making. Paragraph 9 of the guidance explains that heritage assets may be affected by,

direct physical change or by change in their setting. Being able to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset, and the contribution of its setting, is very important to understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals.

The guidance reiterates that the crucial issue in the assessment of proposals is whether development would cause substantial harm to the significance of the heritage asset (para 17) and explains that significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. It states that,

In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. (paragraph 17) And further, that, works that are moderate or minor in scale are likely to cause less than substantial harm or no harm at all. However, even minor works have the potential to cause substantial harm.

The guidance addresses the sometimes confusing policy in the NPPF that relates to substantial or less than substantial harm as set out in paragraph 134 of the Framework. Paragraph 134 notes that where development will lead to less than substantial harm... the public benefits should be weighed against the loss.

The guidance does seek to explain the concept of "public benefits" and what are the practical implications of this test. In paragraph 20 of the guidance and refers to paragraph 7 of the NPPF. It states that,

Public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental progress as described in the National Planning Policy Framework..... Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and should not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits.

Public benefits may include heritage benefits, such as:

- *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*

The current proposal would have an impact on the setting of a number of listed buildings and therefore the issue of the impact of the proposal on the

setting of these heritage assets is an important part of the assessment of the development proposals.

The policy guidance states that as part of the assessment of the impact of a proposal,

A thorough assessment of the impact on setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset under consideration and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it.

The guidance helpfully describes the meaning of setting in paragraph 13,

Setting is the surroundings in which an asset is experienced, and may therefore be more extensive than its curtilage. All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not.

The guidance cautions that consideration of the setting must not be limited to a matter of views to or from the asset. It advises that,

The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places. For example, buildings that are in close proximity but are not visible from each other may have a historic or aesthetic connection that amplifies the experience of the significance of each.

A further important consideration in the matter of determining the extent of a setting or the impact of a proposal on that setting is that public access to or within the setting is not necessary in order for this to be considered part of its significance,

The contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public rights or an ability to access or experience that setting. This will vary over time and according to circumstance.

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning

Historic England has published three Good Practice Advice in Planning Notes (GPAs), *GPA1: Local Plan Making* (March 2015), *GPA2: Managing significance in Decision-Taking in the historic Environment* (March 2015) and *GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets* (December 2017). A further document entitled *GPA4: Enabling Development* is yet to be adopted.

The GPAs provide supporting guidance relating to good conservation practice. The documents particularly focus on the how good practice can

be achieved through the principles included within national policy and guidance. As such, the GPAs provide information on good practice to assist LPAs, planning and other consultants, owners, applicants and other interested parties when implementing policy found within the NPPF and PPG relating to the historic environment.

GPA2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (March 2015)

This document provides advice on numerous ways in which decision-taking in the historic environment could be undertaken, emphasising that the first step for all applicants is to understand the significance of any affected heritage asset and the contribution of its setting to its significance. In line with the NPPF and PPG, the document states that early engagement and expert advice in considering and assessing the significance of heritage assets is encouraged. The advice suggests a structured staged approach to the assembly and analysis of relevant information.

GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Second Edition December 2017)

This advice note focuses on the management of change within the setting of heritage assets. This document replaces *GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets* (July 2015) and 'Seeing History in the View' (English Heritage, 2011) in order to aid practitioners with the implementation of national policies and guidance relating to the historic environment found within the NPPF and PPG. The guidance is largely a continuation of the philosophy and approach of the 2011 and 2015 document and does not present a divergence in either the definition of setting or the way in which it should be assessed.

As with the NPPF the document defines setting as *the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve*. Setting is also described as being a separate term to curtilage, character and context. The guidance emphasises that setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, and that its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset. It also states that elements of setting may make a positive, negative or neutral contribution to the significance of the heritage asset. While setting is largely a visual term, with views considered to be an important consideration in any assessment of the contribution that setting makes to the significance of an asset, setting, and thus the way in which an asset is experienced, can also be affected by other environmental factors including noise, vibration and odour, while setting may also incorporate perceptual and associational attributes which relate to the asset's surroundings.

2.1 LEGISLATION & NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY & GUIDANCE

This document provides guidance on practical and proportionate decision making with regards to the management of proposed development and the setting of heritage assets. It is stated that the protection of the setting of a heritage asset need not prevent change and that decisions relating to such issues need to be based on the nature, extent and level of the significance of a heritage asset, further weighing up the potential public benefits associated with the proposals. It is further stated that changes within the setting of a heritage asset may have positive or neutral effects. It is stated that the contribution made to the significance of heritage assets by their settings will vary depending on the nature of the heritage asset and its setting and that different heritage assets may have different abilities to accommodate change within their settings without harming the significance of the asset and therefore setting should be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Historic England Advice Notes in Planning

In addition to the above documentation, Historic England has published Historic England Advice Notes (HEANs) that provide detailed and practical advice on how national policy and guidance is implemented. These documents include: *HEAN1: Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management* (February 2018), *HEAN2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets* (February 2016), *HEAN3: The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans* (October 2015), and *HEAN4: Tall Buildings* (December 2015). Also of relevance is *Understanding Place, Historic Area Assessments* published in April 2017, *HEAN7: Local Heritage Listing* (January 2021) and *HEAN 12: Statements of Heritage Significance* (Oct 2019).

HEAN12: Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets (October 2019)

The purpose of this advice note is to provide guidance about the way in which the significance of a heritage asset should be assessed. It sets out how this can be achieved as part of a staged approach to assist decision-making.

The advice note identifies that the first stage is to in identifying the significance of a heritage asset is by understanding its form and history. This includes the historical development, an analysis of its surviving fabric and an analysis of the setting, including the contribution setting makes to the significance of a heritage asset.

To assess the significance of the heritage asset, Historic England advise to describe various interests. These follow the heritage interest identified in the NPPF and PPG and are: archaeological interest, architectural interest, artistic interest and historic interest.

To assess the impact to the significance of a heritage asset Historic England state that it is necessary to understand if there will be impacts to

built fabric or the setting of a heritage asset and how these contribute to the heritage asset's overall significance. Where the proposal affects the setting, and related views, of a heritage asset, or assets, it is necessary to clarify the contribution of the setting to the significance of the asset, or the way that the setting allows the significance to be appreciated.

This enables an assessment of how proposals will affect significance, whether beneficial or harmful. It also states that efforts should be made to minimise harm to significance through the design process, with justification given to any residual harm.

2.2 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY & GUIDANCE

Local Planning Policy

Following the Local Plan Examination in July 2019, the Local Plan Inspector concluded that the Plan demonstrably failed one of the requirements for legal compliance, that of the Duty to Cooperate. The Council is not intending to challenge the conclusions of the Inspector and it is likely that the Local Plan will be withdrawn.

This means that in the interim the Core Strategy 2012 and the 1998 Adopted Local Plan provide the basis of the planning policy in the district.

Wealden Local Plan (adopted 1998)

Policy EN22 relates to listed buildings. It states that,

In order to protect the character and appearance of buildings listed as being of special architectural or historic interest:

- (1) proposals for any external or internal alteration, change of use, addition to a listed building, or display of signs and advertisements which would have an adverse effect on its character and appearance will be resisted; (*
- (2) all building materials, doors, windows and other architectural features should respect the character and appearance of the listed building;*
- (3) proposals which would adversely affect the setting of a listed building will be resisted;*
- (4) in very exceptional cases and where demonstrated to be necessary in order to secure the retention of a listed building, the Council may relax normal development control policies.*

Wealden Core Strategy (2012)

The Wealden Core Strategy was adopted in 2012. The Core Strategy does not include any specific policies in respect of the historic environment. However, SP02 states that,

We will ensure that the intrinsic quality of the historic environment is protected and that Wealden's environmental, heritage and cultural assets are used appropriately to encourage suitable tourism development and support inward investment .

3.0 SITE ASSESSEMENT AND ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

3.1 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF UCKFIELD AND BIRD IN EYE FARM

The name Uckfield is thought to derive from a personal name *Ucca* to mean the field that belongs to Ucca. The Anglo Saxon word *feld* means field and is usually associated with the ridges and areas of later medieval downland or common, and suggests an area of cleared woodland or grazed land. A charter was granted in 1220 for a Wednesday market located on the Lewes Tonbridge Road and from here the historic core of the town developed.

A substantial proportion of the original managed medieval woodland around the small market town of Uckfield, was cleared or coppiced in the 16th-17th centuries to provide fuel for the ironworking and glassmaking industries. The Wealden iron making industry was an important part of the economic development of this area. It produced a large proportion of the bar iron (an ingot of cast metal, in a convenient form for handling, storage, shipping and further working into a finished product) made in England in the 16th century and most British cannons until about 1770. Ironmaking in the Weald used ironstone from various clay beds, and was fueled by charcoal made from trees in the heavily wooded landscape. The industry in the Weald declined at the end of the 18th century when ironmaking began to be fueled by coke made from coal, which is not found in this area. During the 16th and 17th centuries there were 23 ironworks within 10km of Uckfield.

The early, pre 18th century road system was particularly poor in this area and contemporary writers describe how difficult and unpleasant it was to travel. However the main north-south road through the town was turnpiked in 1752, followed in 1754 by the Eastbourne Road (from the southern end of the High Street), and in 1766 by the road to Tunbridge Wells (which joined the London road just north of Uckfield and Ringles Cross). A canal was constructed in 1793 to form a branch of the canalised river Ouse. The works to make the river navigable between Lewes and Upper Ryelands Bridge, together with the branch to Uckfield, began in 1790, were undertaken by the Upper Ouse Navigation Company. The river between Lewes and Newhaven was canalised soon after the formation of the Lower Ouse Navigation Company in 1791.

The construction of the railway changed the character of the town which until that point had been a small agricultural economy based on local farming and associated industries. In 1858 the branch line was built from Lewes to the town by the Lewes and Uckfield Railway Company This joined the existing line from Lewes to Keymer Junction which extended to London. In 1868, the southern end of the line was re-routed to provide direct access to Lewes station and, more importantly, was extended northwards as a single-tracked line from Uckfield to Groombridge, providing access to Tunbridge Wells and from there, to London. The success of the extension saw the doubling of the track north of Uckfield in 1894. The section of the line from Uckfield to Lewes was closed in 1969, while the section north of Uckfield still operates today.

The rural hinterland around the town remained largely undeveloped until



Figure 3: Extract from the 1795 Gardner and Gream map. This indicates that at the date this map was produced, Bird in Eye Farm had not yet been established



Figure 4: The Oast at Bird in Eye Farm, from the south

the second half of the 20th century. Modern housing development has extended into the immediate countryside and means that Uckfield today is a thriving and prosperous community.

Bird in Eye Farm lies to the east of Uckfield, along the road to Framfield, the B2102, which is called Bird in Eye Hill. The farm is thought to have been established in the late 18th century, and formed part of the Buxted Park Estate, an historic manorial holding to the north of Uckfield, within the Ashdown Forest. The estate dates back to 13th century and the present house, built in 1725, is now an hotel. On early maps the Bird in Eye Farm is called Budny or Budney. The 1882 Kelly's Directory for Framfield lists a Mrs Harriet Holmes as farmer at Burden Farm, on the Framfield Road. The original farm holding was approximately 28 hectares (70 acres) and tithe records indicate the farm comprised a brick barn, dairy, stable, cow shed, tackle store, house, gardens and enclosed yard as well as the oast house.

The tithe map of 1841 shows the Bird in Eye Farm and its associated land holdings. The apportionment schedule indicates the farmland was owned at the time by a Robert Stone, but the occupier was Henry Staples. The associated holdings include fields, pasture, woodland and a hop garden. The farmhouse was not occupied at the time by either the owner or the tenant of the surrounding fields, but by a third person, a James Jeffries who does not appear to farm any of the nearby land. The farmhouse recorded on the tithe map is not in the same location as the present farmhouse. It appears to be within the centre of the farmstead, to the immediate south of The Oast. The shape and proportions of this building do appear to be more domestic than agricultural, and its sits on a low plinth of ragstone which has also been used to construct a wall around the central section of the yard.

The Oast was recorded and assessed in 1993 by a local buildings historian. The details of the building set out in this report rely on this 1993 survey⁽¹⁾ in combination with a site visit, the author's own knowledge of this building type and an application of professional judgement.

In the article referenced here, it is demonstrated that The Oast at Bird in Eye Farm is a rare example of a kiln which dried hops by means of an enclosed furnace which supplied warm air to the drying floor by means of a system of flues that wind around the walls upward to the upper part of the structure where the hops were laid on a slatted floor to dry. This method was developed in the late 18th century by a gardener and inventor called John Read.

The construction and form of The Oast is unusual in that it was operated using the flue system rather than the conventional upturned funnel that projected the heat upwards. It is in addition a square kiln whilst most of the known examples that used the Read flue system were round shaped kilns. These two factors mean The Oast at Bird in Eye is unusual and of some significance. However, as set out in its list description (below on page 10) the building is significant for reasons of technical rarity and innovation, rather than architectural or aesthetic reasons.

Footnote No 1: Historic Farmbuildings Group Journal 1987, *An Example of Early 19th Century Technology: Bird in Eye Oasthouse, Framfield Parish, East Sussex* by Gwen Jones

3.2 SITE ASSESSMENT

The site comprises approximately 41 hectares (101 acres) to the west of Uckfield and its surrounds, but does not include, the group of buildings that comprise Bird in Eye Farm which lies within the centre of the northern half of the site. There are no buildings or structures within the site.

The northern section of the site extends to the east and west of Bird in Eye Farm and the southern section, comprises two fields to the south of Bird in Eye Shaw, a linear stretch of woodland that extends from the Framfield Stream, eastwards to Hailwell Farm, and east of Nightingale Copse in the west. Development is proposed in the northern section and the southern element of the site would be designated as strategic SANG.

Bird in Eye Farm is accessed off Bird in Eye Hill, or Framfield Road, the B2120 and is located at the end of a short tarmac drive (Figure 5). The farmstead is a mixture of older traditional brick built farm buildings with traditional scales and proportions and larger, wide span sheds and workshops (Figures 6 and 7). The existing farmhouse is located at the southern edge of the group and is an altered and extended building, the historic core of which dates from the late 19th century (Figure 8). The farmhouse faces directly onto the central enclosed farmyard and it has a large enclosed garden to the rear. The Oast is the only listed building on the site. It sits within the farm group, between a cluster of older farm buildings and the menage ground to the north.

As described above in Section 3.1, the farm was established in the late 18th century and the oldest of the buildings remaining on site appear to date from the mid to late 19th century, but they may be earlier. The degree of alteration undertaken to the buildings means dating by means of an external inspection alone is difficult. The older buildings are all extensively altered and The Oast appears to be the only building that has escaped significant alteration or adaption. There is an agricultural presence on site but this appears to be limited to grazing for horses and chickens. The surrounding fields are all pasture, and are not cultivated.

There are numerous non farming activities within the farmyard. These include car repairs and spraying, dog grooming, chiropractors, beauty therapy, liveries, saddle repairs and general building contractors. The range of disparate uses on the site means that there are large areas used for parking around the buildings to the east and to the west of the group of buildings, and to the east is a large yard area with metal box containers, caravans, parked cars and vans and other associated items (Figures 9 and 10).

The farmstead is located on a ridge of higher ground within the wider site. The ground level slopes down to the south and west of the farmstead. To the west the ground slopes noticeably to the Framfield Stream. The western boundary of the site is not visible from within the farmyard or if standing on the west edge of the farmstead, because of the topography of



Figure 5: The tarmac drive entrance to Bird in Eye Farm



Figure 7: Large span modern farm buildings at Bird in Eye Farm, immediately opposite The Oast, seen from the west



Figure 6: One of the large span modern farm buildings at Bird in Eye Farm, seen from the south



Figure 8: North elevation of Bird in Eye Farmhouse

3.2 SITE ASSESSMENT

the site. From here the urban edge of Uckfield is prominent. The eastern extent of the town is clearly visible and means that the experience of the site within this half of the area is not a pristine rural setting and the views across this part of the site, from the farm and from the listed building are not rural but are characterised by its edge of settlement location (Figure 11).

From within the fields to the west of the farm buildings there is a clear view of the listed oast, and the older brick farm buildings. The modern, large span buildings to the rear, within the eastern side of the farm yards are also prominent however. The views are not attractive and do not have an historic or architecturally interesting character. The areas of parking around the buildings also detract from the character of the farmstead (Figure 12). The number of different uses within the farm means that it does not have a typically rural or agricultural character. The parked cars and obvious activities such as car repair workshops do detract from the character of the older farm.

The slope of the land down to the Framfield Stream is quite pronounced, therefore the farm buildings are not visible when viewed from this western boundary to the site.

To the south of the group there is a track that runs south east from the farm group. There are views back to the farmhouse and a number of the larger sheds. There are clear views of the fields that comprise the site to the east and west. The land slopes down to the southern and eastern boundary to the extent that these are not visible from the centre of the site, to the south of the farm.

From the south of the farmstead, from the track that runs to the south east corner of the site, there are views north to the farmhouse and the buildings within the yard. The top of the kiln and a section of the roof of the stowage building to The Oast are visible from this point. The distinctive cowl on top of the kiln means that it is possible to pick out the building and recognise it as an oast because of its particular shape.

The track leads from the centre of the farmyard to the south east corner of the fields to the south east, near to Hailwell Farm. The topography of this part of the site means that from this south eastern corner of the northern half of the site, there is no view of Bird in Eye Farm. From within this section of the field, with Hailwell Farm to the east, the linear stretch of woodland to the south also precludes any views of the fields to the south where it is proposed to establish the strategic SANG.

To the east of Bird in Eye Farm, the fields are pasture and this area is used to graze horses. The views westwards back towards the farm buildings are dominated by the large sheds and the untidy areas of storage of caravans and containers. The oast is visible in a narrow view between the buildings and it is possible to understand what it is because of the distinguishing shape of the kiln roof and its cowl on top. However, this view is



Figure 9: There are a number of cars, caravans and metal containers on the site. This is the view north from the track alongside the eastern side of the farm group



Figure 10: View into the yard to the east of the main section of the farmstead, seen from the track that runs alongside the eastern side of the farmstead, looking west. The upper section of the oast and the cowl can be seen from this point, within the context of the wider, diversified farm yard



Figure 11: From The Oast, and the central part of the farmyard, the western edge of Uckfield is visible across the fields.



Figure 12: From the field to the east of the farm, looking back to the farmstead

3.2 SITE ASSESSMENT

compromised by the encroachment of the sheds and workshop and the generally untidy character of this part of the site.

In summary, the fields around the farm itself are pasture, with a number of horses set to grazing. The proximity of the western edge of Uckfield, coupled with the non farming activities within the farm yard and the lack of conventional agriculture being obviously undertaken means that the site as a whole, when seen from the south has an “edge of town” character, rather than an entirely rural, agricultural character. The ad hoc storage of vehicles and containers on site, added to the commercial non agricultural uses within the farm yard mean the quality of the context and setting to The Oast is not attractive or rural in character.

Within the southern half of the site, to the south of Bird in Eye Shaw, the linear stretch of woodland to the south of the fields around the farmstead, the two fields proposed for use as strategic SANG are entirely enclosed by woodland and mature tree belts along the boundaries. The fields are laid to pasture and contain no buildings or structures. The area is separated from existing areas of new housing to the west, by Nightingale Wood and Lidds Shaw. There is a public footpath that skirts the southern edge of the site which joins to the path to Brookhouse Lane to the south east and Lidds Shaw and the new housing to the west.

Framfield village lies to the east, at the junction of Brookhouse Lane and the B2102, but there is no sense or perception of the village from within this part of the site. To the east also, is Framfield Place, a Grade II* listed house, now divided into flats. This building sits within its enclosed landscaped grounds however and there is no inter-visibility between the gardens to the listed house and the site. To the north west of Framfield Place is the former stables, which is also in residential use and occupies a separate and distinct residential curtilage. It too, is enclosed by mature trees and landscaping and there is no visual connection between it and the site.



Figure 13: The view north, from the track that runs south east from the farmyard



Figure 14: There is a limited view of the upper section of the roof to the kiln and the cowl from the east of Bird in Eye farmyard

3.3 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: LISTED BUILDINGS

Figure 15 opposite, shows the boundary and location of the application site and indicates the location of the listed buildings that may include the application site within their settings.

The National Heritage List Entry list descriptions of the numbered buildings are set out below. These official descriptions are used for identification of the asset only, and do not ascribe significance. If the interior of the building is not mentioned, or other features not included in the official list entry, this does not indicate that these are not important or without significance.

Each listed building is assessed against the national published Principles of Selection for Listed Buildings and their settings described. The contribution the site makes to each listed building is also considered.

In order to add a building to the statutory list it is necessary to demonstrate that the building meets the listing criteria. The Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) has prepared the Principles of Selection for Listed Buildings and the latest revision was published in 2018. This document sets out the general principles applied by the Secretary of State when deciding whether a building is of special architectural or historic interest and should be added to the list of buildings which are compiled under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The statutory criteria for listing a building are architectural interest and historic interest. In terms of the architectural interest of a building it must be shown that the building is,

of importance in its design, decoration or craftsmanship. Special interest may also apply to particularly significant examples of building types or techniques (e.g. buildings displaying technological innovation or virtuosity) and significant plan forms. Engineering and technological interest can be an important consideration for some buildings.

In terms of the historic interest of a building it must be shown that the building demonstrates, *important aspects of the nation's history and / or have closely substantiated historical associations with nationally important individuals, groups or events; and the building itself in its current form will afford a strong connection with the valued aspect of history.*

In the application of these two statutory criteria there are further general principles that are used to assess the degree of importance in order to reach a conclusion about the value of a building in historic or architectural terms. The first principle is age and rarity which broadly means that the older the building, and therefore more rare, the more likely it is to be added to the list. There are broad guidelines set out which group buildings into categories of age.

The aesthetic merits of a building are an important consideration. However the special interest of a building is not always reflected in the visual character or quality of a building and buildings that are selected because they illustrate some kind of technical innovation for example, may have very little aesthetic interest.

Selectivity is an important part of the process of listing and occasionally building are listed because they represent a particular historical type and they are included on the list to ensure that the best examples of that type survive.

National interest is another consideration. Distinctive regional buildings that may illustrate important local traditions or a nationally important but localised industry. The state of repair of a building is not a consideration in the selection of buildings for inclusion on the statutory list.

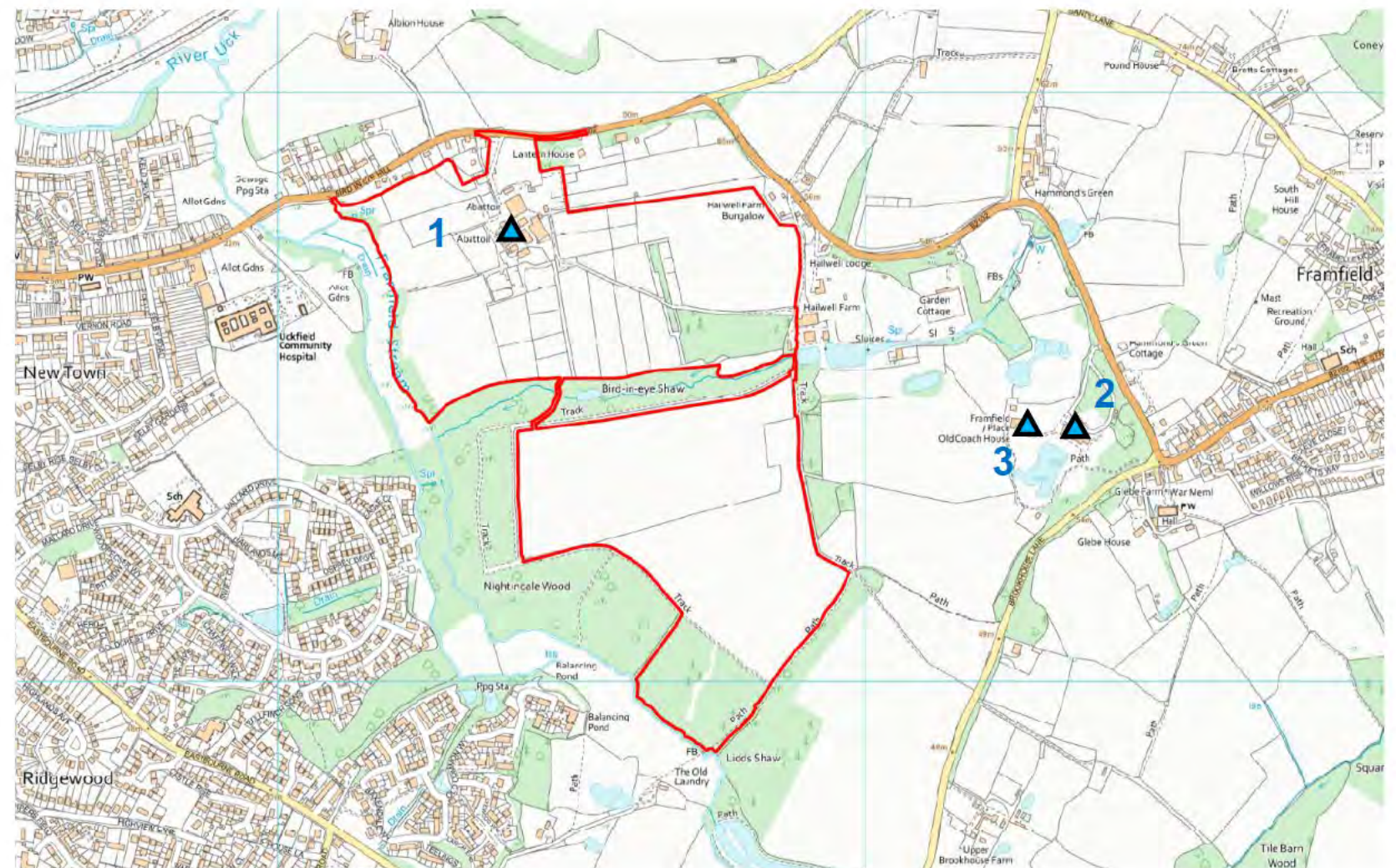


Figure 15: Map to show the extent of the site, indicated by the red line, and its relationship to the listed buildings that may include the site within their settings (map source Historic England). The listed buildings are indicated by a blue triangle and the numbers refer to the text below

3.3 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: LISTED BUILDINGS

1. The Oast at Bird in Eye Farm

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1028381

Date first listed: 31-Dec-1982

Statutory Address: OASTHOUSE TO THE NORTH WEST OF BIRD IN EYE FARMHOUSE, BIRD IN EYE HILL

FRAMFIELD BIRD IN EYE HILL 1. 5208 Uckfield Oasthouse to the north-west of Bird in Eye Farmhouse TQ 4820 43/860 II 2. C19. Square stone building with slate roof and retaining its cowl. Inside, a flue (still intact) winds round the walls of the kiln. Fresh air entering at intakes near the floor was heated indirectly from the hot flue wall before rising through the hop-drying floor. Said to be the only fresh air oast surviving in Sussex. Listed for technical rarity.

Listing NGR: TQ4838520780

The Oast is listed Grade II and is located in the centre of the group of buildings that comprise Bird in Eye Farm, with an open aspect to the west half of the site on its west elevation. The official list description above, states the building is 19th century but gives no further information as to its date and states that the building is the only fresh air oast surviving in Sussex and is therefore listed for its technical rarity. However, this report concludes that it is not a fresh air oast but is in fact an oast constructed with a furnace and a series of flues around the inside of the kiln to deliver hot air to the drying floor where the hops were laid. This assertion does not mean the inclusion of the building on the statutory list entry is not justified, as the building is an unusual example of such a kiln type, but the description itself does appear to be inaccurate.

The earliest surviving oast or hop kilns that exist in a form that would be recognised as such, date from the 17th century. In the South East and West Midlands this building was a rectangular structure, very similar to a conventional barn. This type of building pre dates the development of the pyramidal roofed kiln which most people would associate with the image of a kiln or oast. This early building type included the kiln as an integral part of the building with the drying area in the middle of the structure. This basic arrangement appears to have been modified comparatively quickly to provide for the kiln at one end of the building and upper floors to provide space for cooling and bagging the hops. The smoke and fumes simply escaped through cracks in the roof. Later developments also included the enclosure of the internal kiln from the floor of the building up to the roof vent to prevent fumes and smoke from swirling around in the roof space. This enclosure was in the form of an inverted funnel which was designed to draw the air through the building. Later examples of this internal kiln projected above the ridge of the roof.



Figure 16: The west elevation of The Oast



Figure 18: The east elevation of The Oast. The right hand half of the building was a later addition to the original structure



Figure 17: The south elevation of The Oast. The staircase is a modern replacement of one that would have been constructed in this location to provide access to the drying floor and the stowage area



Figure 19: North elevation of The Oast

3.3 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: LISTED BUILDINGS

There is little evidence within these buildings to provide any certainty about the exact dates these modifications and improvements were introduced. As with many agricultural buildings, the sensible reuse and alteration of existing buildings to adapt to new innovations undertaken by farmers means that exact dating is difficult. It is logical to assume however that this basic model was largely unchanged for over a hundred years because it was fit for purpose, comparatively easy to install in existing buildings or to modify existing barns and malt houses.

The process of drying hops was a complex and subtle process. The heat had to be the correct temperature and the hot dry air had to be consistent across the drying floor to ensure no part of the crop retained any moisture. A small residue of moisture could spoil an entire batch. The orientation and construction of the building was an important factor to ensure consistent breezes and ventilation for the furnace. A further factor which often affected the quality of the finished product was the impact of contaminants from the wood, coal or charcoal used to fire the furnace which could affect the crop.

As described above in Section 3.1, The Oast at Bird in Eye Farm is a “Read” design, using the flue system rather than the conventional upturned funnel that projected the heat upwards. John Read’s design for the flue system was intended to avoid any contamination of the hops through pockets of moisture within the kiln. He was a gardener and inventor and used his experience of the way smoke flues were used in hot houses and steam pipes in pineries and applied this approach to drying hops. He used a system of brick flues supported by piers and arches within the kiln. These carried hot air up to the drying floor and the around the walls of the kiln. The brick flues could maintain a consistent heat without scorching the bottom layer of hops on the drying floor and avoided any pockets of cold air that could affect a batch of dried hops.

As stated above, the circular oast was developed during the 19th century as part of the ongoing push to refine and improve the hop drying process. Circular kilns were considered to be more a more efficient way to circulate the warm air, and therefore produced a more consistent environment for drying the fresh hops. John Read introduced his flue system before the construction of round kilns had become commonplace and so it is sometimes claimed, erroneously, that he developed the round oast. Given that round kilns have been used for drying seeds, grain etc. since pre historic times, it is unlikely that Read is responsible for the introduction of the circular hop kiln.

Read’s undertook his experiments with the new flue system during the late 18th century and he initially carried out his research within square kilns. It was thought that his flue system would be most suitable for circular structures but The Oast at Bird in Eye survives almost intact and demonstrates its suitability for both circular and square or rectangular kilns.

The Oast at Bird in Eye comprises a single kiln within the south west corner of the square footprint of the building. This kiln and the stowage building to



Figure 20: The entrance into the kiln via the lean to on the south side of The Oast. This would have been a blank opening originally, with no doors which lead into a lobby which was shielded from the furnace by two metal doors



Figure 20: The west elevation provides the best view of the squared, coursed ragstone used in the construction of The Oast

the south east corner formed the original structure which was constructed probably in the early 1820s or 1830s. It is mentioned in a lease dated 1838 as part of the Buxted Park estate documents. The additional drying floor and stowage was added between 1899 and 1919 (*G John 1993*). This structure runs across the north wall of the historic core of the structure and created a square floor plan from the original rectangular form of the building.

The elevations to the original structure are Kent ragstone and the stowage structure would have been open at ground floor on the east elevation and timber framed and boarded above. The later section of the building is brick, with boarding to the east elevation. The roof is slate.

Access to the drying floor was via an external staircase. The present stair is a recent construction (post 1993), but located where the external stairs was historically placed (Figure 17). The lean to building on the south side of The Oast is part of the original structure. An entrance into the furnace was via a opening on the east side of this lean to. The small narrow opening on the south side, under the larger square opening was a draught opening to ventilate the kiln. Other draught openings are found on the west wall. This lean to was also used as a sleeping area for the drier when it was in operation.

Inside the kiln the furnace provided the warm air which was carried upwards via brick ducts, supported by brick piers. The ducts were constructed to rise around the external walls towards the underside of the drying floor, supported by a series of brick arches and piers.

The Oast at Bird in Eye is unusual in that it is square and constructed from stone rather than brick. It is unclear why these difference occur here and may simply be due to the preference of the landowner who commissioned the building. The system of flues and pipework matches so closely the descriptions of the John Read system that Gwen John, in her 1993 article suggests that he may have supervised the construction of this building himself. He was known to oversee the building and installation of his flue systems. The shape of the kiln, square rather than circular is unusual and the construction in stone rather than brick is uncommon. However, the choice of stone may be simply that it was the most easily available locally.

The Oast at Bird in Eye Farm was in operation until 1965 which is comparatively late to have remained in use. An internal inspection throughout the building has not yet been possible, but it is understood the system of flues and the furnace remain in situ, and are largely unaltered inside the building.

In addition to the Principles of Selection published by the DDCMS, Historic England also publishes a series of guides to the selection of buildings for listing for a range of building types. Hop Kilns are included within the guide that relates to agricultural buildings. It acknowledges the iconic appearance of oasts and kilns in the landscape and advises that careful consideration of their special interest and significance is given when they are assessed for

3.3 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: LISTED BUILDINGS

designation or development, even if these buildings have themselves been altered already.

The guidance advises that individual buildings should be assessed on their own merits but if a building is located within a group that includes one or more other listed structures (including the farmhouse) it is more likely to be of interest than a building that is the last survivor of a former historic group. If part of a group of historic farm buildings, and those buildings are of an early date, or demonstrate a particular architectural quality, or perhaps could illustrate a local farming tradition over time, these sort of factors contribute to significance and support the case for designation. However, it is acknowledged that not all the buildings within the group need be listed, or listed at the same grade. It is important that each structure is assessed individually.

The Oast at Bird in Eye has special interest and significance because it is an unusual type of oast. It has a square kiln rather than the more usual circular shape. It is constructed from coursed ragstone rather than the more common brick construction. However, it is the unusual construction of its furnace and flue system that is of particular significance. The list description describes the building as a fresh air oast which is not correct. This may be a mistake in the term applied to describe the building, or it may have been a mistake in the original assessment when it was added to the statutory list. Fresh air oasts are very unusual in England and experts have debated whether there is such a thing as a true fresh air system at all in England. The process is found in Holland and northern Belgium and parts of Germany, where the upper floors of tall houses are used as drying floors and the warm air rises through the building. Early examples of the fresh air system in England tend to be remnants of the earliest examples of an oasts, usually attached to a dwelling, where the warm air from the kitchen was used to dry the hops.

The Read flue system is well documented and research has been carried out as to the extent of its use and the buildings which incorporated this system have been recorded and documented. Given the flues and the brick piers and arches within the kiln remain in situ, there is little doubt that this is a Read system kiln and this gives the building its significance. The list description ascribes special interest incorrectly, it is not a fresh air oast, but the mistake does not negate the inclusion of the building on the statutory list because it is the survival of the Read system of flues and its associated furnace, drying floors which gives significance. These remain intact and largely unaltered and therefore the designation of the building remains relevant because of the technical innovation demonstrated within the building. This building is a rare example of its type, and its unusually unaltered for an oast.



Figure 22: Map to show the location of Framfield Place and the Stables North West of Framfield Place (source, Historic England NHLE maps)

2. Framfield Place

Grade: II*

List Entry Number: 1028364

Date first listed: 27-Jan-1978

Statutory Address: FRAMFIELD PLACE, UCKFIELD ROAD

FRAMFIELD UCKFIELD ROAD 1. 5208 Framfield Place TQ 4920 43/858 27.1.78 II 2. Early-mid C19, remodelled by Norman Shaw and Sir Edwin Lutyens. Two storeys. Six windows. Stuccoed. Cornice and blocking course. Slate roof. Two bays of 3 windows each. Sash windows with glazing bars on first floor, French windows below. Central Doric porch. Doric loggia on garden front. Long domestic and nursery wing added to west in late C19. The interior includes an elliptical billiard room, with neo-Adam plaster decoration by Norman Shaw; good staircase with plaster frieze; and a saloon with neo-Jacobean panelling by Lutyens but in the style of Norman Shaw*

Listing NGR: TQ4936320420

As described above, the statutory criteria for listing a building are architectural interest and historic interest. In terms of age and rarity this means that the older the building, the more likely it is to be added to the list. Framfield Place falls into the category of buildings that date from 1850 and before 1945. The selection guidelines state that buildings within this category should be considered with greater selectivity because of the much larger numbers of buildings from this date that have survived.

The detailed selection guide that covers buildings of this type, Domestic 3 Suburban and Country Houses also includes a guide to selection in terms of age and rarity and discusses a number of attributes that should be considered as part of an assessment of a building for inclusion on the list.

As states, Framfield Place, it falls within the time period that requires particular scrutiny in selection because so many buildings of this period survive. Only the best examples should be included. With regard to the aesthetic merits of the house and how these should be assessed, the guide focusses on the inventiveness or innovation in design, the extent to which the interior remains intact and any special decorative details that would enhance the interest of the building.

The fact that this building was remodelled by Norman Shaw and Lutyens gives the building particular significance. Both architects are considered to belong to the highest echelon of British architects who practised during this period and their association with a building invariably means a building is designated and usually at a higher grade. The list description includes details of the interior of the building which is unusual for many listed buildings and more common only when describing the more grand or spectacular buildings. The selection guide advises that when considering

3.3 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: LISTED BUILDINGS

buildings between 1850 and 1939 a greater degree of selection will apply because of the increase in the number of houses and estates built and surviving from this period. Therefore the threshold for listing becomes higher as they approach the present day and the Grade II* status of this building means that it is of particular significance.

3. The Stables to the North West of Framfield Place

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1192036

Date first listed: 27-Jan-1978

Statutory Address: THE STABLES TO THE NORTH WEST OF FRAMFIELD PLACE, UCKFIELD ROAD

FRAMFIELD UCKFIELD ROAD 1. 5208 The Stables to the north-west of Framfield Place TQ 4920 43/858A 27.1.78 II 2. Early-mid C19. Half-H-shaped block, of which the right wing has been restored and is occupied as a cottage but the remainder is derelict. One storeyed building with 2-storeyed centre. Stuccoed. The centre and projecting wings each have Doric pilasters and a pediment over. Cloc-tower with cupola over the centre portion.

Listing NGR: TQ4926720442

This building has significance because of its age, and architectural interest, but principally through its connection to the principal building, Framfield Place. It is today a converted residential building, with a separate residential curtilage to the main house.

The Settings to the Listed Buildings

The Setting to The Oast

The list description confirms this building was added to the list because of its technical innovation. This implies that if assessed on the basis of its age and architectural character alone, it would not be considered suitable for inclusion on the list. This does not mean however, that the building should not be considered in the same way as any other listed building for the purposes of the identification of the extent or character of its setting, nor the way in which that setting may contribute to significance.

Unlike other rural or agricultural buildings it could be argued that it does not rely on the preservation of a large or legible landscape context in which it may be seen and experienced. Many farm building and other structures such as farmhouses, derive part of their significance from the way in which they are seen and understood within an obviously rural setting. A listed farmhouse is more attractive and more understandable if it is seen within its

associated farm land and the setting to a listed barn may have greater significance if it retains a visual link with the fields with which it was historically and functionally connected. The views to and from this type of listed building and the way they are experienced within their settings contributes to the special interest and significance of the listed building.

It may be argued that The Oast does not rely on its setting as a listed agricultural building in the same way that a listed house within its farm setting or a barn would be experienced. The special interest of the building lies in the way it demonstrates technical innovation, not the age of the building or its relationship to its setting.

However, despite the fact that the building is designated for the reasons outlined above, it does still derive some level of significance because of its location within a functioning farmstead, surrounded by farmland. The open character of the area immediately outside the western edge of the farmstead provides clear views of The Oast, where it may be seen within the context of the other traditional, albeit extensively altered, farm buildings. The fields to the west within the sections of fields immediately outside the farmyard to contribute to the significance of The Oast to a modest degree because the building may be seen within a partially rural context.

The setting to the listed building and the other non-designated traditional farm buildings has been compromised by the degree of change to the traditional farmyard that is visible both by means of an inspection on site and from reference to documentary sources such as the historic mapping. The introduction of non-farming businesses on the site has led to a change in character and appearance within the immediate setting to these buildings. This has harmed the setting and therefore reduced the level that the immediate setting within the farmyard contributes to significance. This site is not as sensitive to change in the same way as a traditional farmstead group of historic buildings, which still functions as a traditional farm.

Bird in Eye Farm is not a traditional farmyard with an historic farmhouse and an associated range of buildings. The existing farmhouse is 19th century and extensively altered and extended. There are a number of large, modern buildings and evidence of many non-farming activities around the site which detract from its rural character. In addition, the proximity of the western edge of Uckfield to the west means there are clear and extensive views of the urban edge of the town from within the farmyard itself. This factor has also compromised and eroded the rural character of the farm group.

From the eastern half of the site the views of the listed building in contrast, are not clear or open. From various vantage points within this half of the site, sections of the upper parts of The Oast are visible. The distinctive cowl of the upper section of the kiln is an obvious visual clue as to the

form and purpose of The Oast, but more than that is not readily discernible from this part of the site.

From a limited vantage point, along a field boundary to the immediate east of The Oast and the farm group it is possible to see part of the east elevation of The Oast, with the weatherboarded front and the top of the kiln and cowl above (Figure 14). However, this view is compromised by the proximity of the large wide span farm buildings to either side of the narrow view and other structures on the site such as metal containers and the fuel tanks for machinery.

There are further, limited views of the top of the kiln and the cowl from within the fields to the east of the farm. The distinctive cowl of the upper section of the kiln is an obvious visual clue as to the form and purpose of The Oast, but it is not possible to discern more of the building than the small section of roof and cowl from this side of the farm group.

From the south of the farm group, as with the views from the east, the top of the kiln and cowl only are seen. Whilst within some narrow views from the east, through the farmyard, are possible (Figure 14) even the limited views of The Oast from the south of the site disappear as one moves southward, and the ground level slopes southwards. This part of the setting and these views contribute very little to the significance of the listed building because The Oast is seen above the house, rather than within the wider farm setting and so its function and history is not as readily understood.

In summary, the western part of the setting to the listed building does contribute to the significance of The Oast, within the upper fields, closest to the farmstead, from where the building may be seen. Here it can be experienced within the context of the retained, albeit extensively altered, traditional farm buildings. The level of this contribution could be described as modest however, because of the way in which the older farm buildings have been altered and their relationship to The Oast made less obvious and clear, and the degree to which other, non farming, activities intrude into, and dilute the experience of the listed building. In addition, the modern large span sheds in the background views from this side of the farm diminish the rural character of the site and the experience of The Oast. If the farm group were less altered and retained more obvious historic fabric and if the farm was largely agricultural without the intrusion of other commercial activities, this part of the setting would contribute to significance to a greater degree. The present historic and architectural character of the farm and the level of diversification within the farmyards do however reduce the contribution made by the setting to the significance of the listed building, The Oast.

From the south and the east, the setting contributes to significance to a lesser degree. The partial views are seen within the context of the modern farm buildings and the extensive areas of ad hoc storage of cars, caravans and containers. The character and quality of the views reduce the level of

3.3 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: LISTED BUILDINGS

contribution the setting makes to significance. The experience of the listed building is limited to a partial view which when seen and experienced within the context of this part of the setting means understanding and appreciation of the building is reduced.

The Setting to Framfield Place

This building is largely enclosed by trees and formal landscaping. The grounds to the building form the most important part of its setting and from here the character and appearance of the listed building may be seen and experienced. Outside this immediate enclosed setting, the experience of the listed building is limited. There is an entrance into the grounds to Framfield Place from the road and it is possible to deduce that a building of some status exists within the site, but more than this perception of the presence of a large building or country house at the end of the drive, is not possible. To the east, the fields are separated from the listed building by extensive and mature belts of trees and woodland. These fields contribute to the setting of the building to a modest degree in that they provide a sense of openness and rural character to the immediate environs of the building. The fields to the west of the listed building, and which lie immediately to the east of the application site, therefore contribute to the setting and therefore significance to a limited extent but this contribution could be described as a low level of contribution.

The application site lies to the west of the listed building and is separated from its gardens and grounds by another field, both of which are contained by matures trees and belts of woodland. There are no views into or out of the application site that include Framfield Place and there is little perception of it from the site itself.

The Setting to the Stables North West of Framfield Place

Like Framfield Place itself, the stables are also enclosed by trees and formal landscaping. The former stable building is now in residential use and surrounded by a distinct residential curtilage, separate from that of Framfield Place. The immediate grounds to the building form the most important part of its setting and from here the character and appearance of the listed building may be seen and experienced. Outside this immediate enclosed setting, the experience of the listed building is limited. Even between this building and its neighbour Framfield Place to the south east there is a limited or even negligible inter-visibility, such is the extent of the landscaping around the two curtilages. The entrance into the grounds to The Stables is shared with that of Framfield Place, from the road, the B2102 and like Framfield Place, it is possible to deduce that a building of some status exists within the site, but more than this perception of the presence of a large building or country house at the end of the drive, is not possible. To the east, the fields are separated from the listed building by extensive and mature belts of trees and woodland. These fields contribute

to the setting of the building to a modest degree in that they provide a sense of openness and rural character to the immediate environs of the building. The fields to the west therefore contribute to the setting and therefore significance to a limited extent but this contribution could be described as a low level of contribution.

The application site lies to the west of the listed Stables and is separated from its gardens and grounds by another field, both of which are contained by matures trees and belts of woodland. There are no views into or out of the application site that include The Stables and there is little perception of it from the site itself.

3.4 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: UNDESIGNATED BUILDINGS AT BIRD IN EYE FARM

The Oast sits within a larger group of farm buildings. A number of these are clearly modern farm buildings with wide spans and large footprints, constructed from modern materials. Within the centre of the farm however are a number of older buildings which comprise the original farmstead. The Oast is clearly the most significant building within the farm group, but the other buildings do cluster around it and relate to the wider setting in such a way as to suggest a traditional farmyard arrangement.

These buildings are brick, which is the principal reason they are distinguishable from the larger modern farm buildings. The Oast is the only building constructed from ragstone, and the pattern of occurrence of other ragstone structures provide hints as to the former historic form of the farmyard.

When viewed from the west, there is a stretch of wall constructed large, squared and coursed ragstone that runs from in front of the large brick barn along a section of the west boundary of the farmstead (Figure 23). This runs southwards, between more modern buildings and structures and returns to the farmhouse on its west side. This would appear to correlate to the line of the enclosure to the farmyard shown on historic maps. Figure 24 shows an extract of the 1887 OS map.

The map extract also supports the assumption that the farm building in the centre of the modern farmyard was originally the farmhouse. This building is shown in Figure 23. Although substantially altered, its proportions suggest a domestic building rather than an agricultural one. In addition its location within the farmstead in relation to the entrance from the road, as shown on the map at Figure 24, at the end of the track, or driveway would suggest this was originally the farmhouse. The tithe map of 1842 and the accompanying apportionment schedule record this section of the farmstead as house and garden (plot no 1466) and it is occupied by a different person to the land and farm buildings around it. Therefore it would appear the house was rented to a separate person from that to whom the land and farm buildings were rented, although all were owned by the same individual. The extract of the 1842 tithe map is shown at Figure 25. This pattern of tenure and occupation corresponds to the pattern of ownership when the farm was established in the early 18th century. It was part of the Buxted Estate and occupied by tenants. This is reflected in the schedule of ownership and occupation drawn up at the time of the tithe survey.

The building today is much altered, as stated above. The windows are modern and a modern porch attached to the west elevation. However, the roof shape is more domestic than agricultural. On the north elevation a plinth of ragstone can be seen at the base of the brick wall. This would suggest the house and oast and walls to contain the farmyard were all constructed at the same time.

The building is too altered to be considered for inclusion on the statutory list but given its relationship to the rest of the farm group it has a modest level



Figure 23: There is a stretch of walling constructed from squared, coursed ragstone to the south of The Oast, that runs along part of the edge of the original farmstead

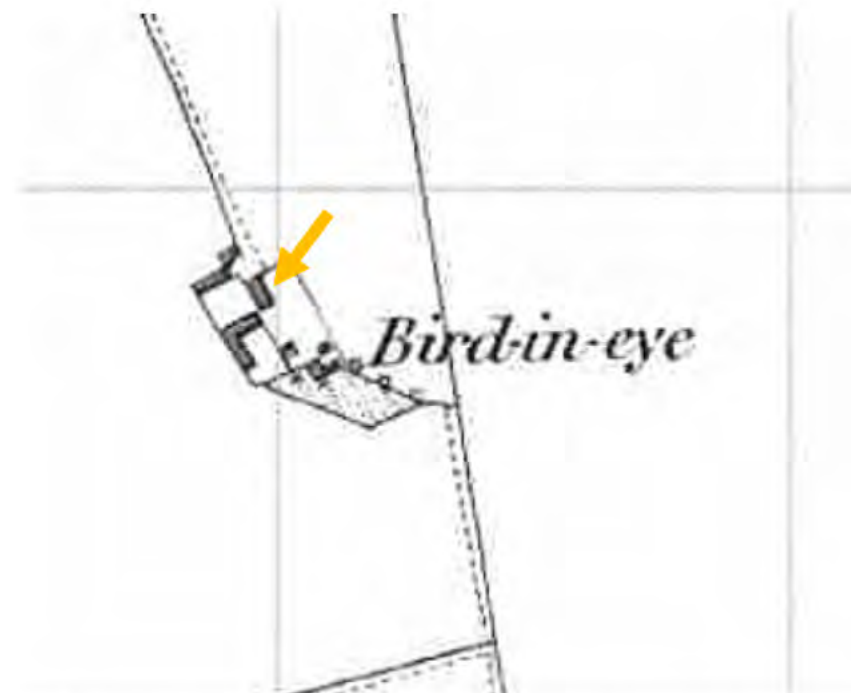


Figure 24: An extract from the 1887 OS map. The yellow arrow indicates the location of the farmhouse as recorded in the 1842 tithe survey apportionment schedule



Figure 25: An extract from the 1842 tithe map to show the way in which the parcels of land and buildings were recorded



Figure 26: The former farmhouse within the centre of the farmyard. The brick building sits on a plinth of squared, coursed ragstone

3.4 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: UNDESIGNATED BUILDINGS AT BIRD IN EYE FARM

of significance in a local context. The scale of the alterations and the character of the wider setting to the building, adjacent the modern shed to the west, mean that its history and connection to The Oast and the historic development of the farm is apparent largely through reference to documentary sources, rather than the appearance or experience of the building on site.

To the south of the former farmhouse and The Oast, is a large brick barn. This structure would appear to correspond to the building shown on the tithe map extract at Figure 25 set at right angles to the former farmhouse.

It was not possible to make an internal inspection during the site visit, but the exterior of the building suggests a substantial barn, with a waggon entrance in both the north and south elevations. The exterior of the building is, like the former farmhouse, extensively altered and like that building, the barn may be too altered to be considered for inclusion on the statutory list. Its relationship to the rest of the farm group means it could be concluded that it has a modest level of significance in a local context, but like the other buildings within the farmyard, with the exception of The Oast, the scale of the alterations and the character of the wider setting to the building, adjacent the modern shed to the west limit its significance. Its history and connection to The Oast and the historic development of the farm is apparent largely through reference to documentary sources, rather than the appearance or experience of the building on site.

Other buildings within the centre of the farmyard, that may correspond to the pattern of buildings on the tithe map are also extensively altered and have limited significance in historic or architectural terms.

These buildings are possibly of late 18th or 19th century construction are extensively altered and their possible date, development and role within the farmyard are apparent only through reference to documentary sources, not through the character, appearance or experience of them on site. They have little significance, as defined within the NPPF, and are interesting in historic terms in the context of what they may contribute to the knowledge and understanding of The Oast.



Figure 27: The barn at Bird in Eye Farm, seen from the north west



Figure 28: The barn seen from the south east, adjacent the former farmhouse

4.0 PROPOSALS & ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

4.1 PROPOSALS

The development proposals comprise an outline planning application for up to 290 dwellings, associated landscaping, informal open space and strategic SANG, with access from the B2102. The appearance, landscaping, layout and scale of the proposals are reserved matters.

A car park to serve the proposed strategic SANG would be located in the north east corner of the site.

Figure 28 opposite shows the proposed layout.



Figure 29: The proposed development

4.2 ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

The proposed layout of the development is shown in Figure 29 above and is included for illustrative purposes. Detailed plans and documents are included in the application bundle.

The principal issues in terms of any impact on the built heritage are the impact of the proposed development on the setting to Framfield Place and the Stables to the North West of Framfield Place and the impact of the proposed development on the setting to The Oast at Bird in Eye Farm.

As demonstrated above, the settings to Framfield Place and the Stables to the North West of Framfield Place do not include the application site. The distance between the two listed buildings and the application site is too great and the intervening landscape too enclosed and heavily landscaped to allow any perception of the site from either listed building or its immediate setting. There are fields between the site and the gardens around Framfield Place and its former stable, but as stated above, the contribution these fields make to significance is limited to a sense of openness within the wider landscape setting.

Given the fields within the southern section of the application site, to the south of Bird in Eye Shaw are proposed for use as strategic SANG, the impact on the immediate area around these fields would be negligible. They would remain as open areas of pasture or grassland and would be managed accordingly. This means that the application proposals would not result in any change to the way in which the settings to the listed buildings contribute to significance. The fields to the east of the application site, which separate the site from the gardens to the two listed buildings would be unaffected by the proposals. The use of the site as strategic SANG, to the west of these fields would not result in any change in character to the extent that could be perceived from the east. The use of the site as open space would result in more visitors to the area, but these would be on foot and not of an intensity that would be perceived within the settings to the listed buildings. Therefore it is concluded that the application proposals would result in no harm to the setting and therefore significance of Framfield Place or the Stables to the North West of Framfield Place.

Within the northern section of the site, where development is proposed, there is one listed building, The Oast, which although not located within the site itself, is sited within the central part of the site, within the Bird in Eye Farmyard. The Oast is listed Grade II and is located in the centre of the group of buildings that comprise Bird in Eye Farm, with an open aspect to the west half of the site on its west elevation.

There are other buildings within the farm group which appear to date from the early 19th century but which could be earlier, and date from the late 18th century, but which are much altered and not statutorily listed. Given their age and group value in association with The Oast, this report considers whether these buildings should be considered as local heritage assets and undesignated heritage assets within the context of paragraph

197 of the NPPF. However, given the character and appearance of the buildings and their wider setting it is concluded that these buildings have a very low level of significance. The degree of alteration is extensive and their historic connections and associations are apparent through reference to documentary sources, rather than experienced on site.

It is considered that the proposed development would not affect the level of significance identified in relation to these buildings. They are much altered remnants of an 18th century farmstead, but the degree of alteration to the buildings and the farm layout and more recently, the introduction of modern buildings and a considerable non farming activities active within the farm means their historic and architectural interest is low.

The official list description for The Oast states the building is 19th century but gives no further information as to its date and states that the building is the only fresh air oast surviving in Sussex and is therefore listed for its technical rarity. Initial research indicates that the building is likely to date from the early 19th century and is not a fresh air oast as stated in the list description, but is rather a rare example of a hop kiln which included internal flues, with a furnace below, to heat the drying floor rather than the much more common inverted funnel type system. It is an uncommon building type and given the flues remain in situ within the building, is of some significance within the context of the development of farm buildings and rural industry. However, the significance of this building lies within its particular construction and the degree to which it informs about the development of the technologies associated with hop production in the late 18th and 19th centuries. It is not listed because of its age or its aesthetic qualities.

Unlike other rural or agricultural buildings it could be argued that it does not rely on the preservation of a large or legible landscape context in which it may be seen and experienced. Many farm building and other structures such as farmhouses, derive part of their significance from the way in which they are seen and understood within an obviously rural setting. A listed farmhouse is more attractive and more understandable if it is seen within its associated farm land and the setting to a listed barn may have greater significance if it retains a visual link with the fields with which it was historically and functionally connected. The views to and from this type of listed building and the way they are experienced within their settings contributes to the special interest and significance of the listed building.

The Oast does not rely on its setting as a listed agricultural building in the same way that a listed house within its farm setting or a barn would be experienced. The special interest of the building lies in the way it demonstrates technical innovation, not the age of the building or its relationship to its setting. It is concluded that the application site contributes to a modest degree to the significance of The Oast. The area to the west of the building is the most sensitive part of the setting to the listed building. This part of the site, within the section of fields just outside the farmstead,

on the higher ground from where The Oast is visible does contribute to a modest degree to the significance of the listed building. As set out above, this contribution is limited by the character of the wider farmyard which includes modern industrial buildings and a wide range of non agricultural uses.

The proposed layout therefore incorporates an open section of the site alongside the western boundary of the farm. This is the most sensitive part of the site in terms of the likely impact of the application proposals on the built heritage, and the area in which the listed building is most clearly seen and experienced. The layout includes an area of sufficient size to allow The Oast to be seen and understood as a former agricultural building. As stated above, the reason for the inclusion of this building on the statutory list is not because of its aesthetic qualities or its obvious relationship to its agricultural hinterland. It is listed because of the technical innovation it demonstrates. It is therefore considered that the extent and location of the open landscaped area to the west of the listed building is sufficient to experience the listed building. There is at present no public access to the site and only visitors to the farm are able to see The Oast at close quarters. The development proposals would therefore provide new opportunities to see and experience the listed building.

The retention of an open area to the west of The Oast would mean that the listed building would be more widely seen and experienced than at present. The landscaped areas would ensure that the character of this view and experience would be broadly the same as it is today. Therefore it is concluded that the level of harm to the setting and therefore significance of the listed building could be described as a low level of harm within the meaning of harm set out in paragraph 196 of the NPPF. However, it is considered that within that wide spectrum of harm described by paragraph 196, this level of harm could be described as negligible harm. The setting to the listed building would be altered and the open fields to the west would be developed, but the provision of new public views and experiences of the building means it is possible to identify this very low level of harm.

To the south and east of the Bird in Eye farmstead, the views and experience of the listed building are less prominent and less immediate. The sensitivity to development within these parts of the site is lower than that to the west. Given the experience of the listed building from these areas is limited, the impact of the proposed development on significance would also be negligible. The proposed layout does however provide for new, enhanced views of The Oast as part of the masterplan and such views should be regarded as a heritage benefit that open up and enhance the setting to the listed building within the south and east of the site. At present, there are no public views of The Oast from this part of the site. The layout would provide an opportunity for an increased appreciation of the listed building within the southern and eastern sections of this northern half of the wider application site.

4.2 ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

Assessment of Harm

It is concluded that the application proposals would result in no harm to the setting and therefore significance of Framfield Place and the Stables to the North West of Framfield Place. It is concluded that they would result in less than substantial harm, to the setting and therefore significance of The Oast. This harm could be described as within the lowest end of that wide spectrum of harm and could be described as negligible harm. This means that paragraph 196 of the NPPF is engaged. This states that,

Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Paragraphs 195 and 196 of the NPPF address the balancing of harm against public benefits. If a balancing exercise is necessary, it is acknowledged that considerable weight and importance should be applied to the statutory duty. In this instance, the statutory duty is to preserve the setting of the listed buildings (S66 of the P(LB&CA) Act 1990). Proposals that would result in less than substantial harm should be weighed against the public benefits of a proposal, including its retention in its optimum viable use.

The guidance sets out to explain how proposals can avoid or minimise harm to the significance of a heritage asset or the wider historic environment. It is crucial that the significance of a heritage asset is understood and consideration of this incorporated into decision making. This heritage assessment and the accompanying application documents set out the way in which the significance has been assessed and understood and how this has shaped the development of the application proposals.

The Planning Practice Guidance reiterates that the crucial issue in the assessment of proposals is whether development would cause substantial harm to the significance of the heritage asset (para 18 of the PPG). It states that,

In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. It is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed. The harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting.

The guidance addresses the sometimes confusing policy in the NPPF that relates to substantial or less than substantial harm as set out in paragraph 196 of the Framework. Paragraph 195 notes that where development will

lead to less than substantial harm... this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.....

The guidance does seek to explain the concept of “public benefits” and what are the practical implications of this test. In paragraph 20 of the guidance it refers to paragraph 8 of the NPPF. It states that,

Public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental objectives as described in the National Planning Policy Framework Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits, for example, works to a listed private dwelling which secure its future as a designated heritage asset could be a public benefit.

The wider planning benefits and heritage benefits are set out in the accompanying planning statement prepared by Woolf Bond Planning, and as part of their planning assessments, these benefits are weighed against the less than substantial harm identified and described in this heritage statement.

The layout of the application proposals responds to the character of the site and the way in which it contributes to significance at present. This site, as a result of the proposed development would become accessible to residents and visitors and this would allow a wider public appreciation and understanding of The Oast.

It is important to take into account the nature and extent of significance identified in this building. It is designed because of the way in which it informs us about the development of agricultural practices. It is included on the statutory list because of its technical innovation, not because of its age or architectural character. As set out above, many farm building and other structures such as farmhouses, derive part of their significance from the way in which they are seen and understood within an obviously rural setting. A listed farmhouse is more attractive and more understandable if it is seen within its associated farm land for instance. The views to and from this type of listed agricultural building and the way they are experienced within their settings contributes to the special interest and significance of the listed building. In the same way, The Oast does not rely on its setting as a listed agricultural building in the same way that a listed house within its farm setting or a barn would be experienced. The special interest of the building lies in the way it demonstrates technical innovation, not the age of the building or its relationship to its setting.

When the impact of a development proposal on a heritage asset is considered, in many instances it is difficult to identify heritage benefits. Public benefits are more obvious and are often part of the balancing exercise within the decision making process, but the inclusion of obvious

heritage benefits such as new or enhanced views and appreciation of the listed building such as those included within these application proposals are considered to be mitigation of any likely impact on the historic built environment.

Therefore it is reasonable to conclude that the changes within the setting of The Oast, which would result from the proposed development, would not have a discernible impact on the significance of the listed building. The proposals would introduce a change in the experience of that setting but not to the extent that it would outweigh the wider planning benefits of the application proposals.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: REFERENCES

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