

HAMPSON



HA064 BIRCHWOOD, BURGESS HILL

Heritage Statement

December 2025

1. Introduction

This Heritage Statement accompanies a planning application for a single-storey rear extension to Birchwood House, a substantial late-Victorian dwelling dating from circa 1890 and located within a designated conservation area in Burgess Hill.

The purpose of this statement is to identify the heritage significance of the site and assess the impact of the proposed development on the host building and the wider conservation area.

2. Heritage Assets

The principal heritage asset is Birchwood House, an unlisted late-Victorian dwelling dating from circa 1890 and located within a designated conservation area in Burgess Hill.

It is understood that Birchwood House was originally constructed as a single, substantial detached residence and was subsequently subdivided to form the present pair of semi-detached dwellings. This historic evolution is typical of large Victorian houses of this period and reflects changing patterns of occupation over time.

The conservation area is characterised by mature plots, landscaped gardens and a mix of historic residential buildings dating from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Its significance lies in the quality and variety of its architecture, the spacious setting of buildings within generous curtilages, and the cumulative contribution of historic dwellings to the area's character and appearance.

3. Significance of the Site

Birchwood House derives its heritage significance from its late-Victorian origins, architectural proportions, materials and surviving period detailing. Despite its later subdivision, the building continues to read as a large and architecturally coherent historic house, making a positive contribution to the conservation area.

The subdivision itself forms part of the building's historic narrative and does not detract from its significance. The principal elevations, scale and character of the original house remain legible, particularly when viewed from the public realm.

To the rear of the property is a collection of later outbuildings, including a garage and storage structures, which are not part of the original historic fabric and make a limited contribution to the significance of the heritage asset or the conservation area.

4. Planning History and Extant Consent

Planning permission was granted under application DM/19/0360 on 16 August 2019 for the demolition of the rear garage, pantry and store and the construction of a single-storey rear extension, together with a detached double garage to the front of the site.

The consent has been partially implemented, including the construction of the approved garage and the removal of consented trees. The permission is therefore extant, establishing the acceptability of the principle, siting, scale and form of a single-storey rear extension at this location.

5. Proposed Development

The current proposal closely follows the previously approved scheme, retaining the same siting, scale and overall extent of development, with a slight reduction in footprint and a refined internal courtyard arrangement to improve functionality and amenity.

The extension is located entirely to the rear of the property, ensuring there is no impact on the principal elevations or the public-facing aspects of the building or conservation area.

6. Design and Materials

The design approach has been carefully developed to ensure the extension reads as a subordinate addition to the historic house. Materials have been selected to reflect and reinforce the architectural language of the existing building, including:

- Red facing brickwork closely matched to the original Victorian façade
- Traditional masonry arches above new openings
- White-painted window and door frames consistent with existing joinery
- A coursed brick parapet detail reflecting established detailing on the west elevation

These measures ensure visual continuity and a high-quality relationship between the extension and the historic fabric.

7. Impact on Heritage Significance

The proposal will result in the removal of later, under-used outbuildings of limited heritage value and their replacement with a carefully designed extension that respects the scale, character and materials of the host dwelling.

Given its discreet rear location, single-storey form and sympathetic detailing, the development will preserve the significance of Birchwood House and preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area. No harm is identified to any designated or non-designated heritage assets.

8. Conclusion

The proposed development represents a minor refinement of an extant planning permission and has been designed with a clear understanding of the heritage significance of the site.

The extension is subordinate, well-detailed and appropriately sited, ensuring that the architectural and historic interest of Birchwood House and the wider conservation area is preserved in accordance with national and local planning policy.

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