

From: Emily Wade <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 04 March 2025 14:14:36 UTC+00:00
To: "Steven King" <Steven.King@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: DM/25/0014, 0015, 0016 and 0017 Land west of Turners Hill Rd

Hi Steve

Comments on the above planning applications, which I understand to form part of a potentially linked or phased development by the same developer.

The proposed development site consists of a series of seven fields located to the west of Turners Hill Road, on the western edge of Crawley Down. The current pair of outline planning applications, which have been submitted in duplicate, are respectively for 200 dwellings on the 5 fields to the south of Huntsland, and 150 dwellings on the two fields to the north, with associated accesses, internal roads, car and cycle parking, open space and play facilities, and hard and soft landscaping.

There are no designated or non-designated heritage assets within the sites themselves, but there are a number within the vicinity:

- Westlands, Turners Hill Road.

This is a Grade II listed former farmhouse of two parallel ranges dating from the 16th century and the early 19th century. The associated farmstead appears to have been largely located to the north of the farmhouse, and is now lost, but there is one remaining outbuilding to the rear of the house which may be regarded as curtilage listed. Westlands Farm is recorded in the West Sussex Historic Farmstead and Landscape Character assessment as a historic farmstead of the 19th century.

Based on the information in front of us, Westlands is likely to be considered to possess architectural value based on its construction and craftsmanship, historical illustrative value as a good example of a Sussex farmhouse altered and extended over the years in response to changing socio-economic circumstances, and aesthetic value based in part on the use of vernacular materials viewed against the landscape from which they were drawn.

As such the surviving rural setting of the farmhouse will make a strong positive contribution to its special interest and the manner in which this is appreciated. The farmhouse fronts on to Turners Hill Road, with residential development opposite. There is further development to the north and south. However to the west a rural landscape of fields and woodland survives. The northern part of the northern application site lies a short distance to the south west of Westlands, separated from it by a field partly occupied by the more modern agricultural buildings associated with Hurst Farm. A public right of way (PROW) runs westwards from Turners Hill Road along the southern boundary of the gardens to Westlands- this continues west along the northern edge of Hurst Farm before turning south and passing along the western side of the application site.

The northern site (fields 1 and 2) therefore forms part of the wider rural setting of Westlands. There is unlikely to be direct intervisibility between the site and the listed building due to intervening screening by trees and the buildings at Hurst Farm, however they will contribute positively to the rural character of the wider approach to Westlands from the south west along the above mentioned PROW, including potentially the currently rural views looking south across Hurst Farm to the site from the part of the PROW just to the west of the listed building. The northern site is therefore considered to make a modest positive contribution to the special interest of the listed building and how this is appreciated.

- Heatherwood South and Heatherwood West, Sandy Lane

These two properties are formed from what was originally one substantial 19th century dwelling, which is now Grade II listed. They are located to the north of Sandy Lane, to the east of Turners Hill Road, and separated from the site by Pestcotts Wood, and modern residential development at Wychwood to the west of Turners Hill Road. In my opinion, given the intervening roads, woodland and buildings the current proposal will not materially affect the setting of this listed building.

- Huntsland House, Huntsland Barn, Primrose Lodge and the Coach House Turners Hill Road

These buildings lie to the south of a trackway leading west off Turners Hill Road. They are situated between the northern and southern proposed development sites. Huntsland House is a substantial house, now run as a boutique hotel and wedding venue. Information on the venue website suggests that the current Victorian house was reconstructed around the shell of an earlier Regency property, elements of which were retained internally, including an attractive oval shaped stair hall. The house has had a number of interesting and significant owners, more information on which can be found on the website, here:

[History of Huntsland House, B&B near Gatwick Airport, Sussex](#)

There are a number of former ancillary buildings around the house, now in separate ownership, which are also of character, and contribute to the group value and the narrative of the assemblage as the core of a modest 19th century country estate. These include the former coach house, and a barn, which according to the information on the Huntsland House website contains much older fabric dating from the farmstead formerly on the site. This would be supported by the inclusion of the group as part of an WSCC Red Archaeological Notification Area as a medieval to post-medieval historic farmstead. In my opinion, the group of buildings at Huntsland merit consideration as non-designated heritage assets of a mid level of interest in the local context, for the following reasons:

- the quality and character of the buildings;
- their group narrative value as a surviving 19th century country house and ancillary buildings, representing the most recent phase of development of a former farmstead, later country estate which appears to have evolved over many centuries, and which retain some fabric and features demonstrating earlier phases of the site's history; and
- the historical associative value of the house due to its association with a number of interesting local figures.

As a former country estate and farmstead, the surviving rural setting beyond the extensive gardens around Huntsland House will make a strong positive contribution to significance of the non-designated assets. Despite the proximity to Crawley Down and the presence of a small number of other more modern dwellings around the group, the entrance track from Turners Hill Road (which is also a PROW) and the wider setting retain a rural character. In particular there will be views from the house and associated buildings, and from the entrance track/PROW to the east of the house across the fields to the south (which form part of the southern application site), and there are reciprocal views towards the group from the Worth Way footpath which runs east-west across the southern edge of this site. The group is also visible in more filtered views looking across the southern site from the PROW running north-south along its western edge. The both the southern and northern sites are visible in views looking north from the PROW to the west of the NDHAs, and contribute to the rural character of the approach to the group from this direction.

- Arne Lodge, Turners Hill Road

This building was originally the southern lodge to Huntsland House, and sat beside a southern approach to the estate from Turners Hill Road which has now been lost. The northern lodge which was located adjacent to the existing, retained northern driveway has been redeveloped. Although extended, the original southern lodge house can still be clearly appreciated, as a single storey, stone faced building set end on to Turners Hill Road in order to overlook the driveway to the estate. In my opinion this building also merits consideration as an NDHA, having group value with the buildings at Huntsland, and as a constituent part of this modest country estate.

However, although the lodge is part of a historical grouping with Huntsland House, it is separated from the southern proposed development site by woodland and more modern development. I do not therefore consider that its setting will be materially affected by the current application.

- Lemon Meadow and Yew Tree Cottage, Turners Hill Road

These two properties are two halves of Grade II listed 16th century timber framed building. Based on the limited information in front of us, I would consider the building to possess architectural interest based on its construction and craftsmanship, historical illustrative value as a good example of a rural Sussex building, possibly a former farmhouse, and aesthetic value based in part on the use of vernacular materials viewed within the landscape from which they were drawn.

As such, the surviving rural setting of the listed building will be considered to make a strong positive contribution to its special interest and how this is appreciated, in particular those parts of that interest which are drawn from historical illustrative and aesthetic values. This rural setting consists largely of fields to the west and north of the building - those to the north, which are separated from the listed building by the Worth Way, are formed by the southern development site. Intervisibility between the listed building and the site will be limited by the height of the former railway embankment along which the Worth Way now runs; however this same elevation also affords clear views over the development site which contribute significantly to the character of the context in which the rear of the listed building is appreciated from the footpath.

The extensive residential development and all the associated works proposed on both the northern and southern sites will have a fundamental impact on their character, which would become suburbanised. This will remove and reverse the positive impact currently made by the sites to the settings of the above mentioned heritage assets. To consider these it turn:

- Westlands

The development on the northern site will affect the character of the approach to the listed building along the PROW from the south west. Given the distances involved and the likely screening by intervening trees and buildings, I would place the harm caused to the contribution made by the rural setting of the house to its special interest at the lower end of the less than substantial scale.

- Huntsland House and associated buildings.

In respect of the northern site, development will affect the currently rural views looking northwards from the PROW which runs across the northern side of the Huntsland grouping. Whilst there is unlikely to be direct intervisibility between the northern development and the NDHAs, this will affect the context within which they are appreciated in terms of the approach to them along this PROW from the west. This will result in a low degree of harm to assets of a mid level of interest within the local context. This harm will be cumulative with that caused by the associated proposed development on the southern site, discussed below.

In respect of the southern site, the proposed development will have a fundamental impact on the currently rural character of views looking southwards and eastwards from the house and its immediate garden setting. It will also affect the context within which the NDHA grouping is appreciated in views looking north from the Worth Way and east from the PROW to the west of this site, as well as the character of the approach to the grouping in both directions along the PROW running along the line of the entrance driveway. The scale and proximity of the development is such that there is also likely to be a marked increase in noise, activity and light levels within the group's setting. All of this will remove and reverse the positive contribution made through setting by the site to the significance of the NDHAs.

In my opinion this will result in a mid level of harm to an NDHA grouping of a mid level of interest within the local context. This will be cumulative with the harm caused by the northern development, as set out above.

- Lemon Meadow and Yew Tree Cottage.

As above, a significant portion of the surviving rural setting of this listed building is made up by the fields within the southern application site. Although direct intervisibility between the two will be limited, there will be a very significant negative impact on the context within which the building is appreciated in views from Worth Way. Given the placement of the main access road to this development running alongside the opposite side of the Worth Way embankment, in close physical proximity to the listed building, and the scale of the adjacent proposed housing development, there is also likely to be a noticeable increase in noise and light pollution in the area, which will exacerbate the negative impact on the contribution which this part of the setting makes to the asset's significance.

This will be contrary to the requirements of District Plan Policy DP34 and in terms of the NPPF will result in a low-mid level of less than substantial harm to the listed building, such that the balancing exercise set out in paragraph 215 will apply.

In summary the proposed residential development on both sites will impact negatively on some of the adjacent heritage assets described above. In some instances, this impact will be cumulative. This harm should be given appropriate weight in any further development of the planning applications.

Thanks,

Emily

Please note that this advice is given at Officer level only and is without prejudice to the formal decision of the District Council.

Submit your planning application online.
<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk>

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