

Heritage Statement

The Lake House

Rowfant, RH10 4TB

Prepared by: Palmer Heritage Ltd

November 2024

Contents

1.	Introduction	1
2.	HERITAGE POLICY CONTEXT	2
	National Policy.....	2
	Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990	2
	Revised National Planning Policy Framework 2023.....	2
	National Planning Policy Guidance 2019	3
	Historic England’s ‘Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets’ (GPA 3)	3
	Mid Sussex District Council Policy	4
	Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031.....	4
3.	HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT AND SITE DESCRIPTION	5
4.	DESCRIPTION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF HERITAGE ASSETS.....	6
	Listed Building Descriptions	6
	Ley House.....	6
	Rowfant Mill.....	7
5.	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND JUSTIFICATION	8
	Extent of the works	8
	Design Justification and Impact Assessment	8
	Ley House.....	9
	Rowfant Mill.....	9
	Conclusions	10
	APPENDIX 1: HISTORIC MAPPING	11
	APPENDIX 2: PHOTOGRAPHS	14

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared to support a planning application in relation to the demolition and replacement of the Lake House, RH10. The proposed development site is within the Mid Sussex District.
- 1.2 This document will set out the policy context, describe the site and any heritage assets that have the potential to be affected by the proposals, assess the impacts of the proposed works on those heritage assets, and provide a justification for the proposed works.
- 1.3 A site visit was undertaken to inform this assessment on the 11th of November 2024, in clear conditions. The site assessment was undertaken from publicly accessible areas only, including public footpaths.
- 1.4 The document is intended to be read alongside the Planning Statement and relevant drawings prepared by Planit Consulting.

2. HERITAGE POLICY CONTEXT

National Policy

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- 2.1 Section 66 of the Act establishes a general duty for a planning authority, in considering whether to grant consent for a development which affects a listed building, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historical interest which it possesses. A building is listed by virtue of its special architectural or historical interest (Section 1(1)).

Revised National Planning Policy Framework 2023

- 2.2 The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in December 2023. Section 16 of the NPPF deals with the consideration of heritage assets and sets out the importance of being able to assess the impact of a development on the significance of heritage assets. Significance is defined as the value of an asset because of its heritage interest. The setting of an asset can contribute to this interest. The setting of a heritage asset is defined 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. A designated heritage asset is recognised by the NPPF to be a World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation; of these, World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Grade I and II* Listed Buildings and Parks and Gardens, Protected Wreck Sites and Registered Battle Fields are noted in paragraph 206 as being of the 'highest significance'.
- 2.3 The NPPF recognises that a balance needs to be struck between the preservation of the significance of a heritage asset and delivering public benefit. With regard to designated assets, paragraph 205 states that the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be on its conservation. Distinction is drawn between those assets of highest significance and those of a lesser significance.
- 2.4 The NPPF identifies harm as being either substantial or less than substantial. Paragraph 207 states that where the proposal would lead to substantial harm to the significance of a designated asset consent should be refused unless the harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefit that outweighs that harm. In cases where less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated asset is anticipated, paragraph 208 requires that this harm should be weighed against the public

benefits of the proposal. In respect of non-designated assets, paragraph 209 requires a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset.

- 2.5 In accordance with the NPPF, this Heritage Impact Assessment sets out the significance of heritage assets likely to be affected by the proposed works. The information provided in this assessment conforms to paragraph 200 of the NPPF, thus the level of detail provided is proportionate to the significance of the affected heritage assets and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on that significance.
- 2.6 Guidance on the application of heritage policy within the NPPF is provided within the Historic England 'Good Practice Guides' and the on-line National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) for the Historic Environment.

National Planning Policy Guidance 2019

- 2.7 The NPPG provides guidance as to the application of policy related to heritage assets and defines the qualities of a listed building.

Historic England's 'Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets' (GPA 3)

- 2.8 Historic England's GPA 3 (2017) sets out guidance for the purposes of assessing the extent of the setting of a listed building. The guidance notes that 'setting is the surroundings in which an asset is experienced and may therefore be more extensive than its curtilage'. However, it is also stated that setting is 'separate from the concepts of curtilage, character and context'; an asset and its setting may contribute to the character of a place, and context is seen as the association of an asset with other places, surroundings or historical and cultural connections.
- 2.9 As per the NPPF, the guidance makes clear that setting 'is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve'. Key to the assessment of setting is the point that 'Setting is not itself a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, although land comprising a setting may itself be designated. Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset or to the ability to appreciate that significance'. It is noted that setting which has historically changed should be assessed in terms of what impact any additional change has; therefore, the baseline setting is that at the time of assessment rather than at a historic point in time.

Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031

- 2.10 The Mid Sussex District Plan was adopted in March 2018, and contains policies intended to steer development in the borough over the period until 2031.
- 2.11 The Plan at section 2.4 notes that the area is rich in heritage, including listed buildings, and that this heritage contributes to the district's unique character and identity. In relation to the priority theme of protecting and enhancing the environment, the Plan contains an objective to 'protect valued characteristics of the built environment for their historical and visual qualities'.
- 2.12 Policy DP34: 'Listed Building and other Heritage Assets' contains the council's requirements for development affecting the historic built environment. The policy requires applicants to protect listed buildings and their settings, through an understanding of any building potentially affected by development. Special regard will be given to protecting the setting of a listed building.

3. HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT AND SITE DESCRIPTION

- 3.1 The Lake House is situated on a private driveway to the west of the mill pond at Old Rowfant, located along a private road from Old Hollow.
- 3.2 The Ordnance Survey mapping of 1870 (Appendix 1, Map 1) shows the surrounding area as being rural. At this time the mill pond and Rowfant Mill at its northern end are in place, the mill having been constructed in the 18th century though its origins may be earlier. To the north-east of the Mill, Rowfant Mill House is shown, and there are a number of outbuildings which were probably associated with the function of the Mill and production of flour. The lane between the Mill and mill pond, which stretches from Old Rowfant in the east to Old Hollow Lane in the west, is shown to be tree lined on the map. This is also the case for the mill pond which is fully tree-lined along its western banks and has a wood named Blackpond Shaw to the east; only the southern tip of the mill pond is open with marshland shown on the map. Stretching west from the eastern bank of the mill pond (in approximately the present-day location of the Lake House) is a stand of trees along a field boundary, which leads to the boundary of Ley House, then labelled as Leyhouse Farm. The map shows trees to the eastern garden of Leyhouse Farm, and a formal garden to the south of the house, along with agricultural buildings to the west and a large pond to the north.
- 3.3 The historic mapping of 1895 and 1912 shows that little changed in the area during the late 19th and early 20th century. By the mapping of 1914 (Appendix 1, Map 2), the Mill had been developed with a large range shown to the north, at the back of the Mill itself. The area remained the largely the same until the mid-20th century, when the mapping of 1958 (Appendix 1, Map 3) shows the Lake House in situ, and also development of agricultural and outbuildings to the west and east of Ley House.
- 3.4 The private lane from which the Lake House, Rowfant Mill and Ley House are accessed has been subject to development of residential buildings at its western end over the course of the late 20th century, and there have been alterations and extensions to these buildings as well. In the case of the Lake House, the main mid-century house comprises a range orientated south-west to north-east, and an extension to the north-east dating from the late 20th century (Appendix 2, Photo 1). The property is set within private grounds and surrounded by trees, which is in keeping with the character of the local area and the historic pattern of tree planting suggested on the mapping.

4. DESCRIPTION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF HERITAGE ASSETS

Listed Building Descriptions

- 4.1 The proposed development site currently contains a dwelling house, situated down a private drive along the western edge of the mill pond at Old Rowfant. The site holds no heritage designations.
- 4.2 There are two listed buildings which have the potential to be affected by the proposed development. A third, Grade II listed Rowfant Mill House (LB 1354908) is approximately 200m away from the site, set back behind intervening built form in slight dip; as such, there is no potential intervisibility or contextual relationship between the listed building and the site, and Rowfant Mill House is consequently scoped out from further assessment.

Ley House

- 4.3 The following listed building description is for statutory address 'Ley House, Old Hollow', as added to the National Heritage List in October 1957 and amended in 1983 (ID 1025570):

Restored and enlarged C17 or earlier timber-framed building with plaster infilling. Ground floor rebuilt in red brick. Horsham slab roof. Casement windows. Two storeys. The original portion has 3 windows. Modern additions to south-west.

- 4.4 The building is as described in the listed building description, showing a variety of two storey ranges including the main original part which appears to face south according to observation from the nearby public footpath, and as suggested by the location of a formal garden on the historic mapping described previously. The house is surrounded by a private garden to the east and south; this garden contains a number of small outbuildings separate from the house and has a boundary on its eastern side of large trees and hedgerows. To the west are additional agricultural buildings, through which the public footpath runs broadly north to south. The listed building is a characterful farmhouse reached by a narrow lane and relatively enclosed in terms of its intervisibility to other buildings in all directions.
- 4.5 Ley House is set within its enclosed garden as described and has a further contributing setting of fields which give legibility to the farm use of the property and create a rural character. The field to the east is large, and viewpoints taken from the public footpath to the north and south of the listed building show extremely limited visibility towards the Lake House over 250 metres away due to the distance

and to the presence of trees surrounding the Lake House (Appendix 2, Photo 2 and 3). The presence of trees to the eastern boundary of the garden of Ley House is considered to further reduce any potential intervisibility between the listed building itself and the Lake House; the enclosure of the listed building appears designed to separate the private areas of the residential building from the farmland and functional agricultural buildings beyond, and historic mapping indicates that the trees to the east of the building have been part of the landscape for over 100 years. As a result, it is the more intimate setting that provides the greatest contribution to the heritage value of the listed building, with the surrounding fields providing an additional rural character that also gives legibility to the historic use and character of the building and its associated farm.

Rowfant Mill

- 4.6 The following listed building description is for statutory address 'Rowfant Mill, Old Hollow', as added to the National Heritage List in May 1983 (ID 1354890):

Originally the mill building, now a house. C18. Two storeys. Three windows. Ground floor red brick, above faced with weather-boarding. Tiled roof. Gable-end to south-east with scalloped bargeboards. Matching modern addition of 3 windows to north-east.

- 4.7 Rowfant Mill, as described within the listed building description, was originally a watermill. The western part, which is the original building, has a distinctly rural character as a result of its materials and external architectural features. The house faces onto a narrow lane across which is the mill pond, and there is a small stone bridge adjacent.

- 4.8 Whilst Rowfant Mill is located within a small historic cluster of buildings, including Rowfant Mill House, it is the relationship between the former Mill and the mill pond which provides the key setting of the building. This setting, with views across the mill pond to its tree-lined edges, makes an important contribution to the special interest of the listed building. Due to the enclosed nature of the mill pond and the low-lying topography within which the Mill is located, there are no views beyond the pond edges, and there is currently no intervisibility between the Mill and the Lake House which lies approximately 150 metres to the south (Appendix 2, Photo 4 and 5).

5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

Extent of the works

- 5.1 Full details of the scheme can be found in the submitted drawings and associated Planning Statement. In summary, the development can be described as follows: construction of a replacement dwelling following the demolition of the existing property and self-contained annexe.
- 5.2 The replacement dwelling is proposed to be of brick at ground floor level, with timber cladding above, and a tiled roof. The style is proposed to be contemporary, with larger glazing predominantly to the south-eastern elevation, though the materials are relatively traditional. The size of the dwelling will be marginally larger than that which exists, having a floor plan of 300 square metres as opposed to the current floor plan of 280 square metres. The height of the building will be broadly similar to that which exists.
- 5.3 It is not proposed to remove any trees during the course of this development.

Design Justification and Impact Assessment

- 5.4 The replacement of the Lake House has been designed to meet the clients' brief for a modern, flexible dwelling suitable to the needs of a family.
- 5.5 The design has taken reference from the built form of the surrounding area, and the existing materials of the Lake House, and utilises brick and timber boarding which is in keeping with other houses to the western end of the private lane towards Old Hollow. This traditional materiality alongside the pitched roof form, allows the contemporary styling of the replacement building remain discreet within its tree-lined location. It is considered that this design approach is appropriate for this site.
- 5.6 The scale and form of the building, as noted above, are broadly similar to those of the existing building, though with a changed orientation which reflects the position alongside the mill pond and allows a better and more functional use of the site without requiring the removal of existing trees. The subservient garage and annexe building to the mill pond side is lower in height, ensuring visibility from the mill pond is minimised.

Ley House

- 5.7 As shown in the previous section, the setting of Ley House includes its garden and agricultural smallholding, and the adjacent fields which provide a rural character to the listed building giving legibility to its position and use. At present there are very minimal views across the field to the east towards the Lake House and only a very small part of the house can be seen through the existing trees of the Lake House site from the footpath adjacent to Ley House. As described, it is likely that any view is further reduced by existing trees to the east of Ley House.
- 5.8 It is not considered that the Lake House is part of the setting of Ley House. Whilst it is recognised that a change in the views to the east of Ley House interrupted by the numerous and historic trees to the east of Ley House itself, could create a small change to the contributing setting of the listed building, the retention of trees to the Lake House site, and the similar scale of the replacement dwelling will result in no change to the setting of Ley House. In addition, the traditional materials and form of the replacement dwelling are such that should glimpses be visible from Ley House, for instance when there is no foliage during winter, these glimpses would not be out of character with the existing situation. Consequently, there will be no harm to the heritage value and special interest of the listed building.

Rowfant Mill

- 5.9 At present there are no views of the Lake House from Rowfant Mill across the mill pond. The mill pond itself is heavily tree lined, and the pond slightly turns a corner to the west at the point where the Lake House is located. The lake House is not considered to be an element of the setting of Rowfant Mill.
- 5.10 The design of the replacement dwelling and its changed orientation remove the closest point of the dwelling to the east, away from the bank of the mill pond. As such, any visibility from Rowfant Mill which may occur during winter when there is reduced tree foliage will be likewise reduced. The improved materiality of the replacement dwelling, which on the millpond side will remove the white, flat roofed late 20th century extension, will further reduce any potential visibility of built form which is out of character in the view. As a result, there may be a slight betterment to the setting of Rowfant Mill as a result of the proposals; certainly there will be no change to the setting of the listed building, and no harm to its heritage value and special interest.

Conclusions

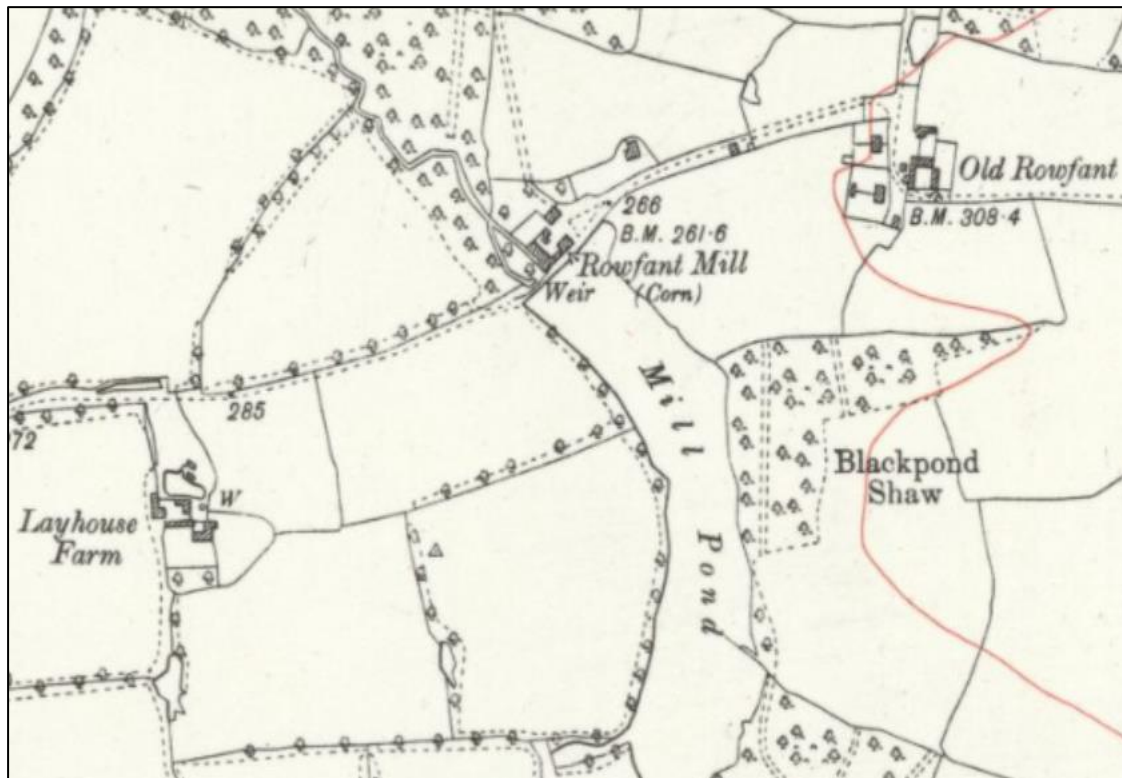
- 5.11 In general, it is considered that the proposals will cause no harm to the listed buildings of Ley House or Rowfant Mill as a result of changes to their setting.
- 5.12 The NPPF defines 'public benefit' as the 'economic, social or environmental objectives of sustainable development'. Sustainable development is development which 'meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of existing communities and future generations to meet their own needs'. There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, in that it should be allowed unless the harms 'significantly and demonstrably' outweigh the benefits. The preservation and enhancement of the historic environment is seen as an environmental objective of development. The scheme proposed preserves the historic environment in the area surrounding the Lake House. Where the NPPF discusses harm, it is considered that in this case there is no harm to the historic environment, and therefore the stipulations of the national policy are more than met.
- 5.13 The design adheres to the District Plan objective to protect valued characteristics of the built environment for their historical and visual qualities, as there will be no harm to the listed buildings or their settings.
- 5.14 The proposals also meet the requirements of policy DP34 in that they protect listed buildings and their settings. Special regard has been given to protecting the setting of listed buildings; in this way, the development also adheres to the national policy contained within the 1990 Act.
- 5.15 The proposed works will allow the residents of the Lake House to create a modern, attractive and functional home, whilst retaining the heritage value and architectural interest of the listed buildings of Ley House and Rowfant Mill and protecting their setting.

APPENDIX 1: HISTORIC MAPPING

Map 1: Ordnance Survey: Six inch to the mile, Surrey Sheet XLII, 1870 (National Library of Scotland)



Map 2: Ordnance Survey: Six inch to the mile, Surrey Sheet XLII.SW, 1914 (National Library of Scotland)



Map 3: Ordnance Survey: National Grid Maps, 1:2500, 1958 (National Library of Scotland)



APPENDIX 2: PHOTOGRAPHS



Photo 1: Lake House from the drive (towards south)



Photo 2: Taken facing to the east from the public footpath at the north of Ley House, showing view towards Lake House.



Photo 3: Taken facing to the east from the public footpath at the south of Ley House, showing view towards mill pond and heavily enclosed boundaries of Ley House garden.



Photo 4: Taken facing west, along lane looking towards the Rowfant Mill grouping.



Photo 5: Taken facing south-west, across mill pond from lane in front of Rowfant Mill, towards location of Lake House.