

31 Sussex Road

Haywards Heath

RH16 4DZ

Dear Mr Watts

DM/26/1461 Replacement of rooflight with conservation rooflight. Removal of dormer and replacement with a conservation rooflight. Construction of new dormer window to match existing dormer windows. Replacement of modern timber doors with Crittall style doors and reinstatement of original gates. Replacement of casement windows to match existing. Reconfiguration of internal layout. Removal of modern plasterboard ceiling to expose roof structure. Installation of roof insulation at rafter level. Replacement of garage doors. **Minor landscaping works**. New electric car charging point.

I am writing to object to this application. Please note this letter is my own personal opinion and does not express the views of the IHBC organisation.

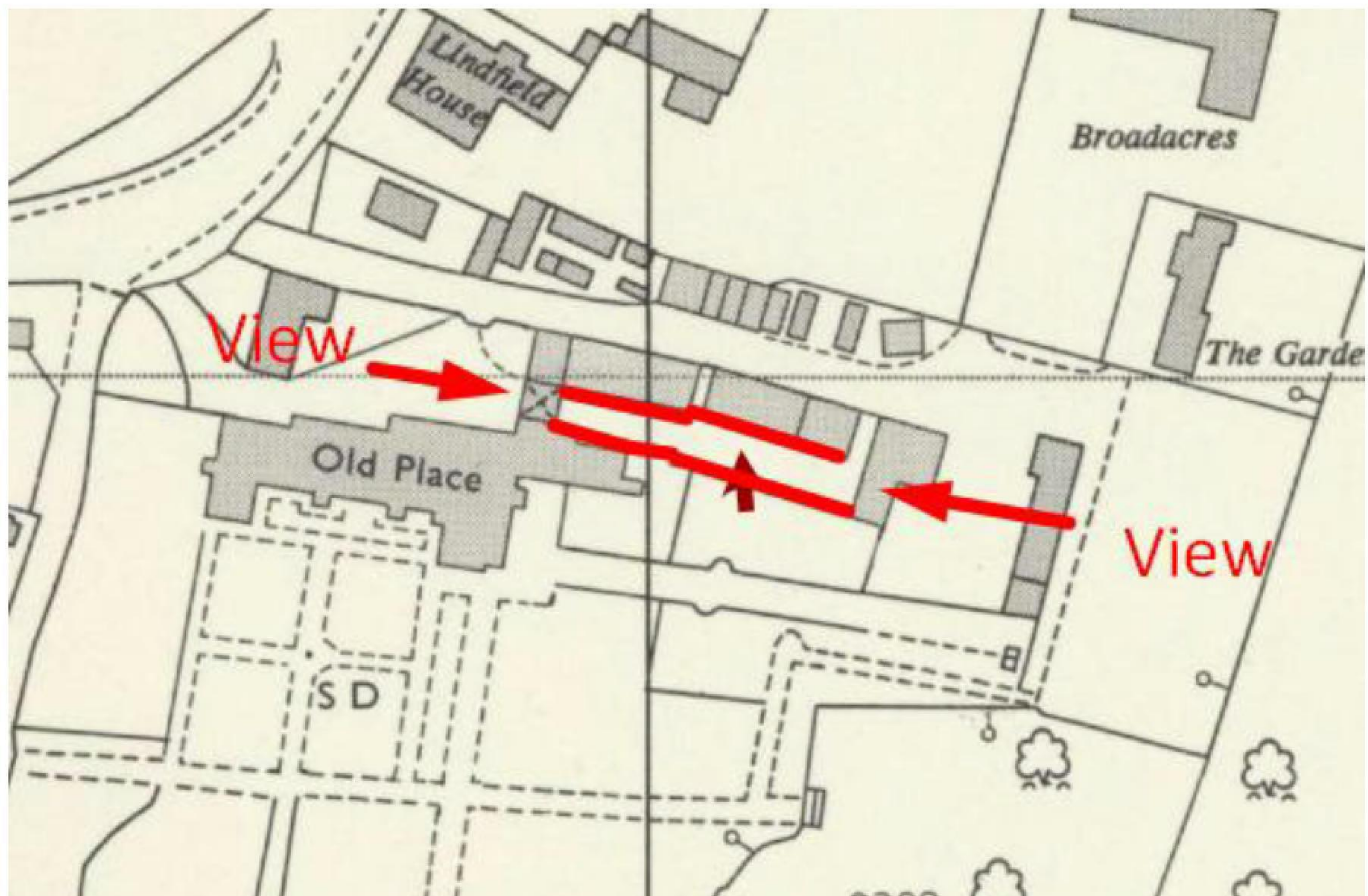
The description under which the application has been registered is misleading. The proposed landscaping works cannot reasonably be described as "minor", as they would result in significant harm to the setting of the group of dwellings created through the subdivision of The Old Place.

The application understates the scale and impact of the proposed external works, which have the potential to erode the character and appearance of this historic enclave. The works proposed include the construction of a permanent solid 0.9m high wall to replace the existing metal gates as shown on the drawings PL.002. The cumulative effect of the landscaping proposals would adversely affect the setting and significance of the heritage assets, and the application should therefore be assessed on the basis of their full impact rather than being presented as minor works.



This photograph illustrates how the buildings relate to the wider context of The Old Place. The red brick courtyard in front of Mulberry House and Sundial Cottage makes an important contribution to the character and setting of the listed buildings. Historically, this space has been kept open, preserving the long views between Turret House and White Lodge and reinforcing the visual relationship between the buildings.

The openness of the courtyard is a key element of the historic composition of the site, and its preservation is fundamental to maintaining the significance and appreciation of this group of listed buildings.



The applicant proposes the removal of a substantial area of the original red brick paving and its replacement with a grassed area, together with the proposed brick wall which will destroy the historic site lines. This would represent an inappropriate domestication and gentrification of a space that has historically retained its original design intent and which is subject to covenants intended to preserve the character of this historic enclave.

The brick-paved courtyard forms an integral part of the setting of the former coach house and stables that it once served. It's hard-surfaced, functional character reflects the historic use of the site and contributes directly to the significance of the listed buildings and their setting. Replacing this surface with a domestic lawn would erode that historic character, creating a suburban appearance entirely at odds with the site's heritage significance.

The proposal would also compromise the important visual relationship between the buildings. The courtyard should remain open and uncluttered, preserving the view through the archway forming the entrance to Turret House towards the principal elevation of White Lodge. This long view is a defining element of the historic layout and contributes significantly to the appreciation of the architectural and historic interest of the group.



The historic photographs above and below illustrate the long view through the archway at the entrance to Turret House towards the former stables. They demonstrate that the openness of this courtyard has long been an integral feature of the site, preserving important views through the complex and reinforcing the historic relationship between the buildings.

These views are an important component of the setting and significance of the listed buildings. The proposed alterations would erode this established spatial relationship by introducing a more domestic character into what has historically remained an open, functional courtyard.



Although not strictly a planning matter, Mid Sussex District Council should be aware of the original legal and physical subdivision arrangements affecting the site. The configuration of the buildings and their associated spaces formed part of the context that influenced the

current occupier of White Lodge when purchasing the property approximately 18 months ago.



There are understood to be covenants associated with the property which restrict the erection of structures across the courtyard area setting. In addition, there is a right of way serving Turret House which runs across the courtyard through an archway that is currently infilled.

These arrangements were put in place to protect the open character of the courtyard and, in particular, to safeguard the key views between the archway entrance to Turret House and White Lodge, and vice versa. The proposed works risk undermining this established spatial and legal framework.

Historic England's guidance adopts the definition used in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) of setting namely.

"Setting is the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve."

In Historic England's GPA3 The setting of Heritage Assets setting is not merely the land immediately around a heritage asset. Rather, it comprises those surroundings that **contribute to the asset's significance or allow that significance to be appreciated.**

Key principles from Historic England include:

- **Setting is about significance, not distance.** There is no fixed radius or boundary. The relevant setting depends on what contributes to the heritage asset's significance.
- **Setting extends beyond curtilage.** A listed building's setting will often be much larger than its legal curtilage.
- **Setting is more than visual.** While views are often important, setting can also include:
 - historical relationships;

- functional relationships;
- spatial relationships;
- tranquillity, noise, smell or vibration;
- landscape character;
- the way the asset is approached and experienced.
- **Setting can contribute positively, negatively or neutrally** to significance. Existing development may already detract from significance, while new development may enhance or further harm it.

The Heritage Statement has identified why this carriage way is important in points:

4.4 that ‘the red paving area as a large carriage way, between the existing Mulberry Cottage and Sundial as evidenced by the brick work in this area’ going on to say this would have ‘given open access to the yard behind the former stables from both Old Place and the Stables’

The statement goes on to highlight how important this open area is saying:

4.5 ‘The stables formed part of a broader estate ensemble developed by Kempe, which included his private studio pavilion to the south and two elaborate sets of ornamental gates to the north and west. Together, these structures created a coherent and carefully choreographed architectural composition, presenting a unified Tudor-revival character to the High Street while providing the functional infrastructure required for a gentleman’s residence in the Edwardian period

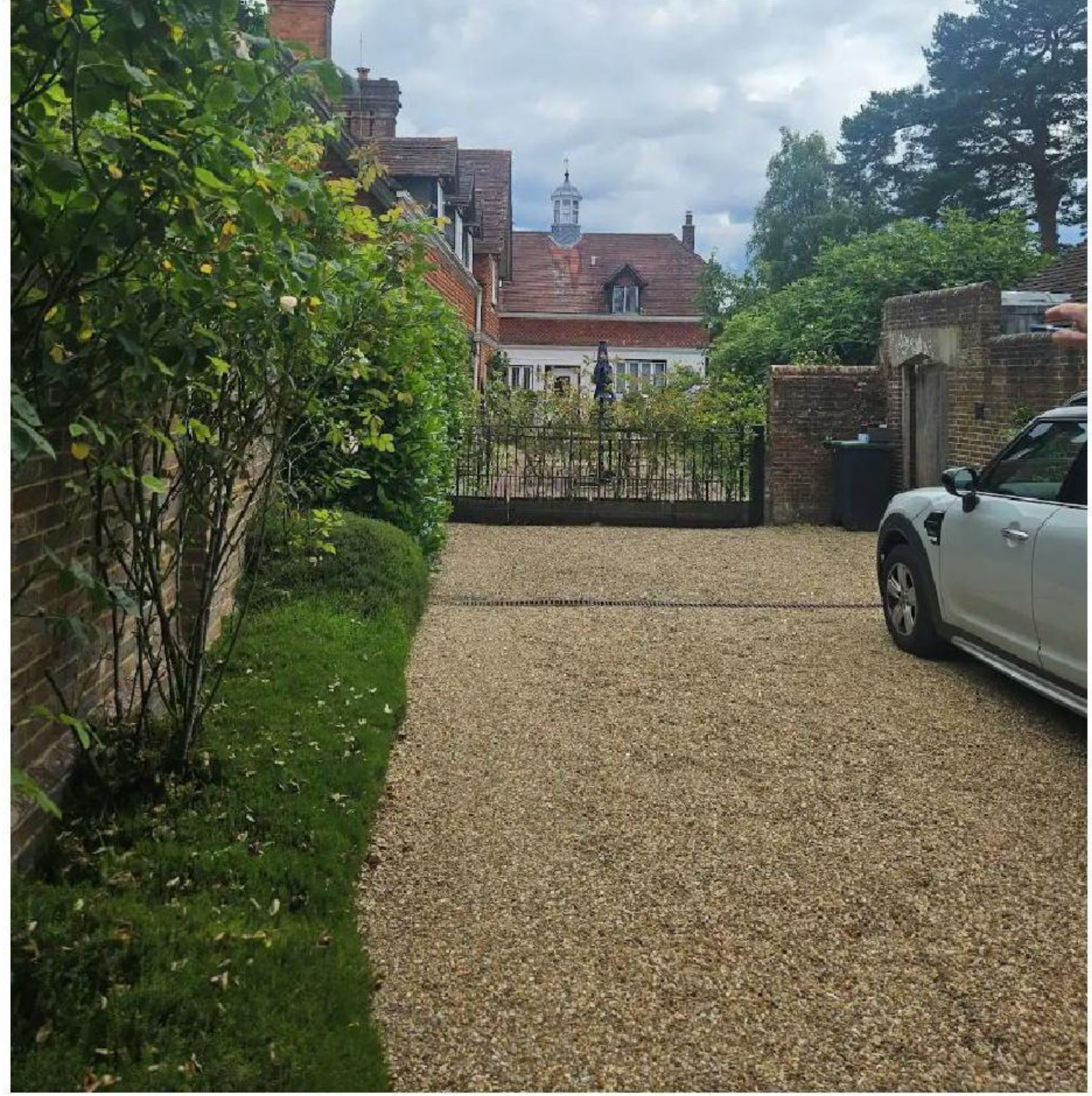
4.8 states ‘ Despite internal subdivision and the insertion of modern domestic features, the external Arts and Crafts character of the former stable range remain strongly legible. The brick and tile-hung elevations, dormers with metal casements, and the central carriage arch continue to express the building’s Edwardian estate character and maintain its historic relationship with Old Place. As a result, the range contributes significantly to the architectural cohesion of the Old Place group’

6.25 states also that ‘Mulberry Cottage also derives part of its significance from its group value with Old Place (Grade II*), which dominates the architectural hierarchy of the site. The stable range was intentionally designed to complement, rather than rival, the main house. The preservation of sightlines, materials, and roofscape relationships ensures that this hierarchy remains readily understood.

The proposed development would harm the established sightlines across the site, which are already being incrementally altered through the introduction of measures intended to create increased privacy and seclusion, including hedging within temporary wooden planters.

These changes are contributing to a progressive domestication of what is historically a more open and functional courtyard environment, resulting in significant concern for the occupiers of White Lodge.

The current situation should be assessed in the context of the site layout and visual relationships as shown on the sales particulars at the time the property was purchased. These illustrate a markedly more open arrangement, with clear intervisibility across the courtyard, which formed part of the understood character of the property at the point of acquisition.



The photographs above demonstrate the gradual domestication of the courtyard and the resulting erosion of the historic sightlines through the site. When compared with the photographs contained in the 2024 sales particulars prepared by Jackson-Stops, below it is clear that the openness of the courtyard has already been diminished by the introduction of temporary domestic features.

These changes are beginning to obscure the important visual relationship between Turret House and White Lodge and undermine the original design intent of this historic service courtyard. The current application would exacerbate this trend, resulting in further harm to the character, setting, and significance of the listed buildings and the carefully composed spatial arrangement that has survived for generations.



Prior to the installation of planters in front of them, the metal gates allowed clear views through the site, maintaining the openness identified as part of the original design intent as set out in the applicant's heritage statement.

The enclosure of this area, and the introduction of permanent gates, would disrupt this designed openness and diminish the carefully arranged spatial composition of the courtyard. The existing arrangement contributes to a deliberate visual sequence and "choreography" of spaces that reflects the historic function and hierarchy of the site.

Service and utilitarian areas are no less significant in heritage terms. They are important in understanding the former lives of the servants who worked within and supported the

operation of the main house. The proposed works would therefore undermine the legibility of this historic arrangement and its associated social history.

In accordance with paragraph 194 of the NPPF, the significance of heritage assets includes their setting, and applicants are required to describe that significance and the contribution made by those relationships. In this case, the application fails to adequately address the importance of the open courtyard, the designed intervisibility between Turret House and White Lodge, and the wider spatial composition of this historic service arrangement.

The continued erosion of these open relationships is harmful to significance. Paragraph 199 of the NPPF confirms that great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, and paragraph 200 requires that their conservation is undertaken in a manner appropriate to their significance. The courtyard's openness, functional character, and designed visual connections form part of that significance.

The proposed development would exacerbate this incremental domestication and further obscure important visual relationships within the group. This would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage assets, within the meaning of paragraph 201 of the NPPF, which must be weighed against any public benefits. In this case, no such public benefits are evident that would outweigh the identified harm.

The proposal would therefore conflict with the statutory duty to have special regard to the preservation of listed buildings and their setting, and with the objectives of Section 16 of the NPPF.

Heat Pump position - Whilst I support the installation of a heat pump in principle, I have concerns about its proposed location. It is positioned directly adjacent to the neighbour's boundary, where it will be highly visible and detract from the setting of the listed building. This appears to have been given little consideration. Heat pumps are an important part of the transition to low-carbon heating, but they need to be integrated sensitively, particularly within the setting of listed buildings. In this case, the unit has effectively been "plonked" on the site without sufficient regard for its visual impact on neighbouring properties or the heritage significance of the location.

Furthermore, the heat pump is sited a considerable distance from the building, which seems unnecessary. It should be demonstrated why this location is required, and consideration should be given to relocating the unit closer to the building, or to a less prominent position, where it would reduce its visual impact while still functioning effectively.

Kind Regards Jo

