



ENGLISH HERITAGE

SOUTH EAST OFFICE

Ms Susannah Emery
FAREHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL
CIVIC OFFICES
CIVIC WAY
FAREHAM
PO16 7AZ

Direct Dial: 01483 252017
Direct Fax: 01483 252001

Our ref: P00300329

Dear Ms Emery

**Notifications under Circular 01/2001, Circular 08/2009 &
T&CP (Development Management Procedure) Order 2010**

**LAND TO REAR OF BLACKBROOK GROVE, 23 THE AVENUE, FAREHAM,
HAMPSHIRE
Application No P/13/0891/FP**

Thank you for your letter of 5 November 2013 notifying English Heritage of the above application. I visited the site on 5 September 2013, along with Mike Franklin and yourself, to assess any potential impact on the setting of Blackbrook Grove, a grade II* listed house, as a result of development within the orchard area. I then submitted some pre application comments. It is disappointing that this proposal does not address the concerns raised at the pre application stage.

Summary

Blackbrook Grove is a substantial house, built within extensive grounds. Both the house and gardens were designed in a romantic style in the early 19th century and being designed together the setting of the grade II* listed house makes a positive contribution to its significance. The proposal is to build four houses within the grounds of the listed house. As a result of the extent, scale, design, and location of the housing this development would have an adverse impact on the setting of the listed building. Such harm must be weighed against public benefits to satisfy the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework. I am not aware of any public benefits resulting from the development and therefore I recommend that this application application should be refused.

English Heritage Advice

Blackbrook Grove (listed as Bishopwood) was built in the early part of the 19th century in the romantic cottage ornee style, which was popular at that time. It is an attractive example of the style with many of the key features such as the thatched roof, Gothick



EASTGATE COURT 195-205 HIGH STREET GUILDFORD SURREY GU1 3EH

Telephone 01483 252000 Facsimile 01483 252001
www.english-heritage.org.uk

English Heritage is subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 2000 (FOIA) and Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR). All information held by the organisation will be accessible in response to an information request, unless one of the exemptions in the FOIA or EIR applies.



ENGLISH HERITAGE

SOUTH EAST OFFICE

windows and rustic veranda still intact. It is now a large house, having been much extended over time, and sits within extensive grounds which are on the local Parks and Gardens Register.

This proposal is for the erection of four dwellings to the south west of the main house in an area which was formerly an orchard. This proposal will not have a direct impact on the listed building and therefore it is the setting of the house which must be considered.

The gardens comprise several character areas. Nearest to the house are formal lawns and mature trees. There is a former walled garden area to the west, a woodland area to the south and the former orchard to the south-west. The current setting of the house has already been affected by modern development and activity. There is a busy road to the north and new development to the west. These new houses are glimpsed in views from the house (largely because the current owners have established a 4 metre high hedge to screen the new development). However, when looking out from the house to east, west and south the setting is largely free from the intrusions of modern development because the garden is well stocked with trees, hedges and shrubs.

The gardens would have been laid out at the time the house was built. They were romantic and picturesque in style (as is the house) with woodland walks and a key vista down to a viewing platform which afforded views of the sea beyond. The key axial walkway still survives within the Blackbrook grounds (although I understand that the viewing mound, which is beyond this property boundary no longer exists). There was and is a strong association in historical design terms between the house and its gardens, they were constructed for use and enjoyment together (as the axial walkway illustrates) and therefore it can be concluded that the setting of the listed building contributes to its significance. In this case the gardens are not the incidental surroundings to the house; they were conceived as a whole.

In the English Heritage guidance *The Setting of Heritage Assets* under key principles for understanding setting there is a definition of setting given:

“Setting is the surroundings in which an asset is experienced. All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance, or may be neutral.”

The Guidance also explains that “Setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation. Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset.”



EASTGATE COURT 195-205 HIGH STREET GUILDFORD SURREY GU1 3EH

Telephone 01483 252000 Facsimile 01483 252001
www.english-heritage.org.uk

English Heritage is subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 2000 (FOIA) and Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR). All information held by the organisation will be accessible in response to an information request, unless one of the exemptions in the FOIA or EIR applies.



ENGLISH HERITAGE

SOUTH EAST OFFICE

Having visited the site I would conclude that the gardens to Blackbrook Grove make a positive contribution to the significance of the listed building and therefore a development which harms the setting would harm the significance of the listed building.

The orchard area is much diminished in terms of its historic interest and the contribution it makes to the significance of the house or the garden. Nevertheless it does retain some significance by being a surviving part of the former layout and it is still a green, undeveloped and open space. It would also be very easy to restore this area of the garden if so desired.

The proposed development is for four substantial houses (2 storeys and attics). Two are Georgian in style and two are Edwardian. They would be visible from the listed building as glimpsed views through trees. Although one would not have an open view of the new houses (provided the vegetation was retained) one would be conscious of the existence of development in an area currently perceived as an open space (via narrow views across the space to the trees on the far side of the plot). The design of the proposed houses bears no relation to the listed house or the gardens, nor are they true to modern design. While one would not want to dictate a style for new build there appears to be no logic to the styles selected. They are also large, although not as big as the listed house. I would suggest that if any development is to be acceptable in this location then it should be wholly subservient to the main house, collectively and individually.

The area which would be taken up by this new development is a significant portion of the garden area. The development of houses in the former orchard would mean that this section of the garden could no longer be considered to be part of the setting of the listed building. In this regard the setting would be much reduced and (as stated above) the enjoyment of the house and the rest of the gardens would also be impinged upon by this intrusive development.

Taking the extent, scale and design of development into account along with the loss of garden area and the visibility of the houses from the listed building I would conclude that this development would harm the setting of the Blackbrook Grove.

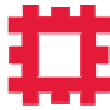
The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that 'great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require a clear and convincing justification.' (Para. 132).



EASTGATE COURT 195-205 HIGH STREET GUILDFORD SURREY GU1 3EH

Telephone 01483 252000 Facsimile 01483 252001
www.english-heritage.org.uk

English Heritage is subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 2000 (FOIA) and Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR). All information held by the organisation will be accessible in response to an information request, unless one of the exemptions in the FOIA or EIR applies.



ENGLISH HERITAGE

SOUTH EAST OFFICE

This is a grade II* listed building and therefore a proposal which would affect its setting must be given especially careful consideration. As set out above I conclude that the proposal would cause harm to the setting and therefore, as required by the NPPF, this harm must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

The benefits of the proposal would be the erection of four houses. Unless there is a need for such houses in the Fareham district and that this is reflected in your housing policies I would suggest that this would be a private benefit, not a public one. This is a matter for the planning authority to consider and weigh up.

My pre application comments suggested that there may be the opportunity to build some houses within the orchard site, but there were several key considerations:

- the number of units be reduced to say one or two
- the development be confined to the southern half of the site, furthest from the house
- the screening between the listed house and any new development be thickened
- the northern part of the orchard could be restored to enhance the setting of the house
- the access road required little change to the existing gravelled drive

I do not feel that this current proposal addresses these points.

Recommendation

I consider that the current proposal would cause a less than substantial level of harm to the setting of the grade II* listed building. This degree of harm should be outweighed by some public benefit to meet the requirements of the NPPF, but I see no public benefit in this proposal and therefore I would recommend that this application be refused. I suggest that a reduced development could be accommodated within the orchard, if sensitively designed, which would have a negligible adverse impact on the setting of the listed building.

Please contact me if we can be of further assistance. We would be grateful to receive a copy of the decision notice in due course. This will help us to monitor actions related to changes to historic places.



EASTGATE COURT 195-205 HIGH STREET GUILDFORD SURREY GU1 3EH

Telephone 01483 252000 Facsimile 01483 252001
www.english-heritage.org.uk

English Heritage is subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 2000 (FOIA) and Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR). All information held by the organisation will be accessible in response to an information request, unless one of the exemptions in the FOIA or EIR applies.



ENGLISH HERITAGE

SOUTH EAST OFFICE

Yours sincerely

Marion Brinton

Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas

E-mail: marion.brinton@english-heritage.org.uk

cc



EASTGATE COURT 195-205 HIGH STREET GUILDFORD SURREY GU1 3EH

Telephone 01483 252000 Facsimile 01483 252001

www.english-heritage.org.uk

*English Heritage is subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 2000 (FOIA) and Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR).
All information held by the organisation will be accessible in response to an information request, unless one of the exemptions in
the FOIA or EIR applies.*