



Heritage assessment

45A Portsdown Hill Road, Bedhampton, Havant, PO9 3JU

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This assessment is in accordance with **Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** that relates to conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Paragraph 128 requires an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a development proposal.

Purpose of report

To assess the impact of redeveloping this site to provide a replacement dwelling on the setting and significance of the neighbouring property, No.47 (Sunspan) Portsdown Hill Road, which is a statutory listed building.

Site and surroundings

Comprises a detached dwelling, probably dating from the 1940s. There is accommodation on two levels over a partial basement. It forms part of a group of detached dwellings located on the south side of Portsdown Hill Road. The existing dwelling has no particular architectural interest and it has been acknowledged by the local planning authority that redevelopment in principle would be acceptable subject to a satisfactory relationship being formed with No.47.

Planning history

On 11 August 2016 planning permission was refused (LPA Ref: APP/16/00495) for the demolition of existing dwelling and construction of a two-storey and lower ground level 4 bedroom detached dwelling and attached garage. (Resubmission.)

The reasons for the Council's decision to refuse planning permission were:

1. The proposed development by virtue of its design, scale, mass and proximity to the side boundaries, will have a significant detrimental impact on the neighbouring properties. The proposal is therefore contrary to policies CS16 and CS11 of the

Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy) 2011, the Havant Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2011 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.

2. The application lacks an assessment of the adjacent listed building, its setting and how the proposed development has been designed to preserve and take account of this. It therefore falls short of the requirement set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), related guidance, Policy CS11 of the Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy) 2011 and Policy DM20 of the Havant Borough Local Plan (Allocations) 2014.

3 Notwithstanding Reason 2 above, the proposed development by virtue of its design, scale, mass and proximity will have a significant detrimental impact on the setting of the neighbouring Grade II listed building (no.47). As such it is contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Planning Practice Guidance (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment; Design), related Historic Environment Good Practice Advice and policy CS11 of the Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy) 2011.

Aspiration

To achieve a redevelopment scheme that overcomes the reasons for refusal set out above.

Relevant legislation

Section 16 of The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local planning authorities, in determining applications, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses

Heritage assets

The neighbouring property to the east (No.47 Sunspan) is a grade II listed building. This is a designated heritage asset as defined in the NPPF. The location is not a

conservation area and there are no other heritage assets nearby, either designated or non-designated.

Description of heritage asset

Sunspan is a modernist house built to designs by Wells Coates and David Pleydell-Bouverie in 1936. It was derived from the Sunspan design, first exhibited at the 1934 Ideal Home Exhibition, which (with variants) was intended for use by speculative builders as an alternative to the usual traditional design of house. The plan was that the architects would receive royalties on the copyright.

The design was an early attempt to create an economic standard modern house that could be implemented in an estate layout. Designed to allow maximum light into the interior, the Sunspan House was also planned to offer similar levels of privacy to houses of traditional design. A frame-and-panel building, it had 50mm pipe columns sandwiched between double membranes of Lewis dovetail steel sheeting. Once completed, both pipes and sheeting were hidden because the entire building was externally cement-rendered and internally plastered.

Wells Coates had chosen to study engineering despite being informally trained as an architect by his mother who was herself an architect. He developed a strong interest in modernist concerns and designed a number of retail premises using glass, plywood and aluminium or steel which set new standards of retail design. Following a collaboration with committed patrons of modernist architecture and design, Jack & Molly Pritchard on some flats in Hampstead, Coates developed designs for revolutionary low-cost mass housing by means of prefabricated aluminum structures. 'Sunspan', a two-storey house designed to allow the maximum amount of sunlight into the building, was that shown at the Ideal Home Exhibition in 1934.

Significance of heritage asset

The significance of a heritage asset is the sum of its architectural, historic, artistic or archaeological interest. The English Heritage document, *Conservation Principles*, identifies four types of heritage value that an asset may hold: aesthetic,

communal, historic and evidential. Sunspan has primarily aesthetic value and perhaps some historic value derived from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life may have been connected to the property. It is a fine example of a modernist dwelling and was designed to take advantage of the impressive views over Langstone Harbour and Portsmouth to the south.

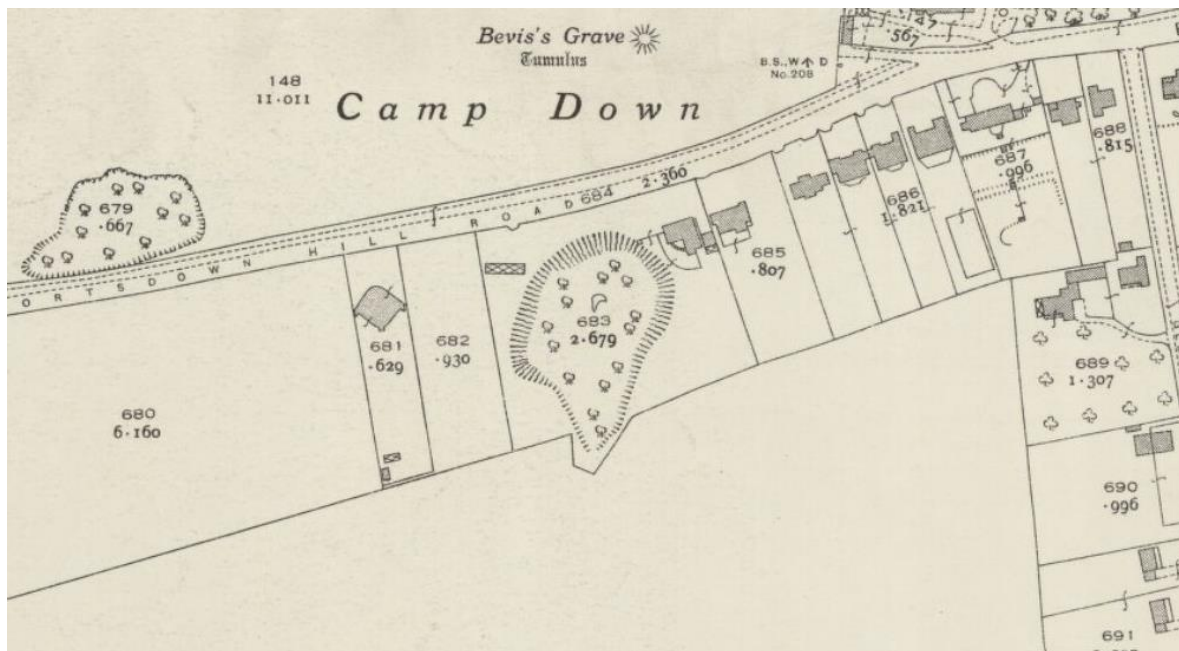


Figure 1. Extract from 1939 map showing wider context.

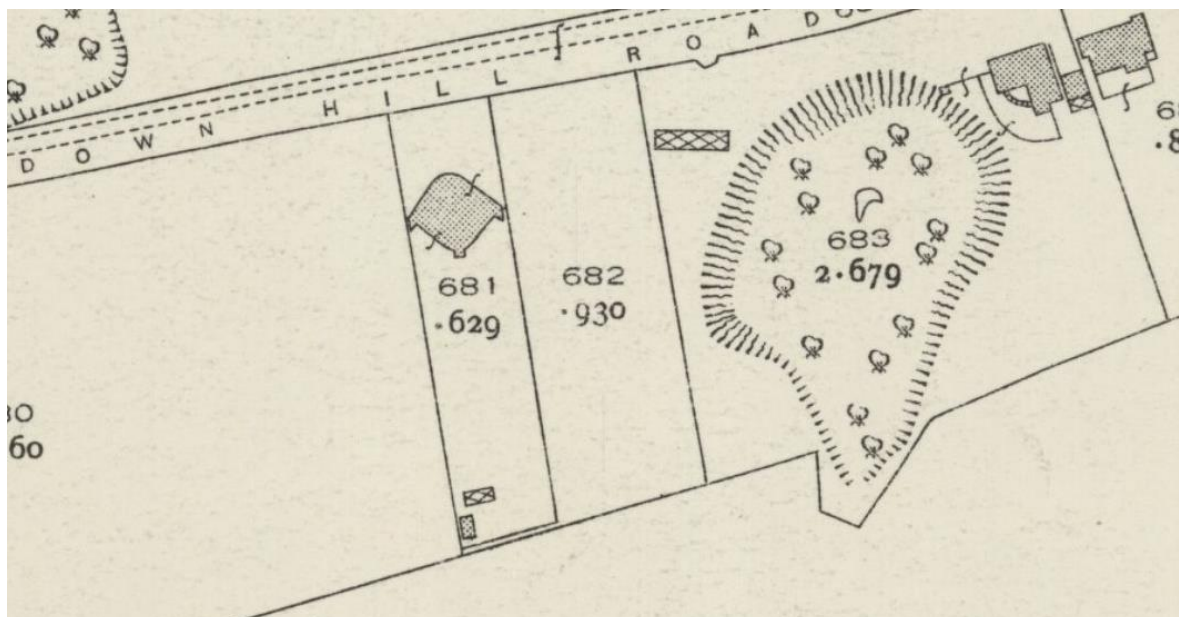


Figure 2. Same extract but more focussed on application site and Sunspan.



Figure 3. The frontage of Sunspan is largely screened by a mature hedge.



Figure 4. View from flat roof of No.47A looking towards Sunspan.

The Sunspan design was developed to be used in many different urban and suburban situations. As such there is no particular plot size or context that is strictly necessary to achieve an appropriate setting. The existing plot size for Sunspan does not appear to have changed since its construction in 1936. The extracts from old maps illustrate a particular plot size that is the same today. The adjoining plot to the east has been developed with Nos. 45 and 45A. This rather varied context should not be seen as untypical because the modernist Sunspan design was meant to offer an alternative to the traditional suburban dwelling designs, and as such, would in many cases be seen in a similar varied context to that at Portsdown Hill Road.

Impact on setting and significance of heritage assets

The development envisaged would not have any direct physical impact on the heritage asset. There would, however, be some effect on the setting of the asset. The frontage appearance would change as a result of redevelopment. There is potential to improve the relationship and therefore setting of Sunspan. The removal of the awkward angled frontage and replacement with a more integrated and ordered front elevation could result in an improved setting. The main frontage of the new dwelling could also be brought forward slightly to align with the neighbouring dwellings. Consideration could be given to using a rendered finish with fenestration of high quality. Perhaps a flat roofed design would offer a better solution to keep the overall height down. The rear aspect is arguably just as important as the frontage and therefore it is crucial that the existing outlook from the windows at first floor level in Sunspan is respected.

Heritage and planning policy

The following local policies are relevant to the application proposals in respect of the neighbouring listed building.

Policy CS11 (Protecting and Enhancing the Special Environment and Heritage of Havant Borough) in the Adopted Core Strategy

Paragraph 4 of this policy requires that development:

Protects and where appropriate enhances the borough's statutory and non-statutory heritage designations by appropriately managing development in or adjacent to conservation areas, listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, historic parks and gardens, archaeological sites, buildings of local historic or architectural interest.

Policy DM20 (Historic Assets) in the Local Plan (Allocations) Adopted Version states:

Planning permission will be granted for development that conserves and enhances the historic assets of Havant Borough. Applications that affect, or have the potential to affect, heritage assets are expected to provide a Heritage Statement that:

- 1. Describe the significance of the asset and its setting, using appropriate expertise and where necessary original survey, at a level of detail proportionate to its significance and sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal.*
- 2. Sets out the impact of the development on the heritage assets and mitigation that is proportionate to the impact and the significance of the heritage asset, including where possible positive opportunities to conserve and enjoy heritage assets.*

Comment: The significance of the heritage asset affected by the proposed development has been described. Subject to an appropriate design, siting and materials it is considered that a larger volume dwelling than the existing could be achieved that would respect the significance of the listed building and arguably improve its setting.

Chapter 12 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* provides central government advice on the historic environment. Paragraphs 132 and 133 confirm that development that would cause substantial harm to the significance of a heritage asset should usually be resisted unless substantial public benefits would outweigh the harm. Paragraph 134 confirms that development resulting in less than substantial harm to the significance of a heritage asset should be weighed against the public benefits of a proposal.

Comment: It is considered that in principle a new larger dwelling would not cause harm, substantial or otherwise, to the designated heritage asset that is adjacent listed building. The curtilage of the listed building would not be physically impinged upon but the setting would be changed to a small extent but not in a way that would result in harm to the significance.

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (English Heritage, 2015) is the most up to date guidance relating to setting. The extent of setting is explained in this document as follows:

The NPPF makes it clear that the setting of a heritage asset 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. 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. All of the following matters may affect the understanding or extent of setting:

- *While setting can be mapped in the context of an individual application or proposal, it does not have a fixed boundary and cannot be definitively and permanently described for all time as a spatially bounded area or as lying within a set distance of a heritage asset because what comprises a heritage asset's setting may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve or as the asset becomes better understood or due to the varying impacts of different proposals; for instance, new understanding of the relationship between neighbouring heritage assets may extend what might previously have been understood to comprise setting.*
- *Extensive heritage assets, such as landscapes and townscapes, can include many heritage assets and their nested and overlapping settings, as well as having a setting of their own. A conservation area will include the settings of listed buildings and have its own setting, as will the village or urban area in which it is situated (explicitly recognised in green belt designations).*
- *The setting of a heritage asset may reflect the character of the wider townscape or landscape in which it is situated, or be quite distinct from it, whether*

fortuitously or by design (e.g. a quiet garden around a historic almshouse located within the bustle of the urban street-scene).

- *Setting in urban areas, given the potential numbers and proximity of heritage assets, is therefore intimately linked to considerations of townscape and urban design and of the character and appearance of conservation areas. The character of the conservation area, and of the surrounding area, and the cumulative impact of proposed development adjacent, would suggest how much impact on the setting should be taken into account.*

Furthermore, there is guidance regarding views and setting as follows:

The contribution of setting to the significance of a heritage asset is often expressed by reference to views, a purely visual impression of an asset or place which can be static or dynamic, including a variety of views of, across, or including that asset, and views of the surroundings from or through the asset, and may intersect with, and incorporate the settings of numerous heritage assets.

Paragraph 12 of this document sets out a method to assess the impact of development on heritage assets as follows:

Step 1: identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected:

Step 2: assess whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s);

Step 3: assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance;

Step 4: explore the way to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm.

Comment: The heritage asset has been identified and its setting. A carefully conceived new dwelling that respects the southern outlook from the listed building and relates more sympathetically to its distinctive design could have beneficial effects rather than any harmful impact on significance.

The Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide also sets out guidance relating to setting. Paragraph 121 is considered relevant to the application proposals. It states. *The design of a development affecting the setting of a heritage asset may play an important part in determining its impact. The contribution of setting to the historic significance of an asset can be sustained or enhanced if new buildings are carefully designed to respect their setting by virtue of their scale, proportion, height, massing, alignment and use of materials. This does not mean that new buildings have to copy their older neighbours in detail, but rather that they should together form a harmonious group.*

Comment: It is considered that the heritage asset would be sustained as a result of a carefully and sympathetically designed new dwelling. The height, massing, design and use of materials, in particular, would ensure that the heritage asset and new dwelling form a harmonious group.

The *English Heritage Conservation Policies and Guidance* (2008) provides comprehensive guidance on the built heritage. Paragraph 138 advises that *New work or alteration to a significant place should normally be acceptable if:*

- a. there is sufficient information comprehensively to understand the impacts of the proposal on the significance of the place;*
- b. the proposal would not materially harm the values of the place, which, where appropriate, would be reinforced or further revealed;*
- c. the proposals aspire to a quality of design and execution which may be valued now and in the future;*
- d. the long term consequences of the proposals can, from experience, be demonstrated to be benign, or the proposals are designed not to prejudice alternative solutions in the future.*

Comment: It is not considered that the principle of a new dwelling would be contrary to any of the advice contained in this guidance.

Conclusions

It follows that a more sympathetic and respectful relationship with the neighbouring listed building is possible through redevelopment of the existing dwelling.

The existing dwelling exhibits no architectural interest and sits as a poor relation to its much more distinguished neighbour (Sunspan).

Both the northern and southern aspects of Sunspan must be respected in any redevelopment. The south-east facing first floor windows of Sunspan currently enjoy a view over part of the rear garden of No.45A. It would be respectful to maintain an element of view by restricting the amount of first floor accommodation.

There is opportunity, through a sensitive redevelopment of the exiting dwelling, to improve the relationship with Sunspan, and consequently enhance its setting.

Appendix A

Listing Text

HAVANT

SU60NE PORTSDOWN HILL ROAD, Bedhampton
100-0/3/10005 (south side)

No.47
Sunspan

II

House. Built in 1936 to designs of 1936 by Wells Coates and David Pleydell-Bouverie. White-painted rendered brick. Flat asphalt roofs. PLAN: Diagonally-set on a north-south axis with curved north and south corners; the south is the garden front and has a broad terrace over a projecting basement and is flanked by the kitchen and garage wings. The entrance is on the north corner at a higher level because of the sloping site. International Modern style. EXTERIOR: 2 storeys and basement. Symmetrical north front has curved corner at centre, the ground floor

projecting, the central recessed porch has a curved door and a flat canopy integral with the single storey kitchen and garage wings to left and right. The first floor set back has 3 windows, the centre curved. Set back again, on the roof, a block containing the water tank with an integral chimney. The south garden front is also symmetrical with a curved central corner; the basement projects and has curved window bands and a central doorway; terrace above flanked by rear walls of kitchen and garage wings and set back 2 storeys of the main block with curved window bands on both floors. All metal-flame casements with curved glass on the corners. INTERIOR: The interior plan and most of the details remain intact. Drawing room has original brick fireplace and plywood folding doors to dining room and study, which have cast moulded plaster electric fires set in walls. 2 similar fires in bedrooms. Staircase on angle behind central chimney stack, has solid balustrade with chromium-plated tube handrail. Curved door to principal bedroom. NOTE: This house is derived from the Sunspan design, first exhibited at the 1934 Ideal Home Exhibition. The design, with variants, was intended for speculative builders as an alternative to the usual traditional design of house and that the architects would receive royalties on the copyright. SOURCE: The Architects' Journal, April 26th 1934.

Listing NGR: SU6911306302

References

<https://www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/101249638-sunspan-havant#.WVo50ITysdU>

The Architects' Journal, April 26th 1934.