

Heritage Team response

Land north of Solent Road (adjacent to Bosmere Medical Centre) Havant

APP/21/00601

Proposal –

Proposed Portsmouth Water Headquarters building (Use Class E(g)(i) use) and new employment premises (Use Class B2.B8/E(g)(iii) use); widened access onto Solent Road; and associated access, car parking, landscaping and works; including the felling of 7No. trees the subject of TPO No.1801 in order to improve the access and allow for the development.

The Site

The site is an open section of land located in Havant, north of Solent Road. It lies to the south of the existing Portsmouth Water premises. To the east is the Bosmere Medical practice building and to the west lies Brockhampton Road. The site is located adjacent to the Brockhampton Conservation Area on two sides, with the far most eastern corner falling within the conservation area boundary. To the west on Brockhampton Road, lies The Old Manor House, a Grade II listed property. There are no existing buildings on the site and it is enclosed by a line of trees on the west.

Legislative and Policy Context

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires planning authorities, when considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires planning authorities, when considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a Conservation Area, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of that area.

National Planning Policy Framework

The revised NPPF (July 2021) sets out in Chapter 16, the core principles relating to development affecting Heritage Assets that local planning authorities should consider in making planning decisions in the following paragraphs:

189. Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

194. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities

should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

195. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

196. Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.

197. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

199. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

200. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;
- b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

Historic England Advice

In addition to the advice laid out in the NPPF, Historic England has published planning advice in the form of Good Practice Advice Notes (GPA's) and Historic England Advice Notes (HEANs). Most relevant to this application will be GPA2 – Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment and GPA3 – Setting and Views.

GPA2 states at paragraph 4 - 'The significance of a heritage asset is the sum of its archaeological, architectural, historic, and artistic interest'. It also advises that an assessment of significance is required as part of the application process including the understanding of the nature of the significance, the extent of that significance and level of significance. Paragraph 11 states 'to accord with the NPPF, the application will need to undertake an assessment of significance to inform the application process an extent necessary to understand the potential impact (positive or negative) of the proposal and the level of thoroughness proportionate to the relative importance of the asset whose fabric or setting affected'.

GPA3; the Setting of Heritage Assets defines setting 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. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of the asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral”.

GPA3 advises a broad approach to assessment, undertaken a series of steps that apply proportionately to the complexity of the case, from straightforward to complex;

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

Step 2 – Assess the degree to which these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset or allow significance to be appreciated.

Step 3 – Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether the beneficial or harmful, on that significance or on the ability to appreciate it.

Step 4 – Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm.

Step 5 – Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.

Local Planning Policies

Policy CS11 (Protecting and Enhancing the Special Environment and Heritage of Havant Borough) states that planning permission will be granted for development that:

“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 CP16 (High Quality Design) (1a) of the Core Strategy states that “Planning permission will be granted for development that is designed to a high standard, which helps to create places where people want to live, work and relax. All development should demonstrate that its design:

Identifies and responds positively to existing features of natural, historic or local character within or close to the proposed development site”.

Policy DM20 of the Allocations Plan states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that conserves and enhances the historic assets of Havant. It also states that application which 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.

Emerging Policy E13 from the Draft Local Plan 2036 provides similar advice to existing Policy CS11, but also adds that where harm cannot be avoided, mitigation may be proportionate to the impact and the significance of the heritage assets and fully incorporated into the development proposals.

Proposal

The proposal is for a new Portsmouth Water HQ's as they are moving from their current site which is north of the application site. The proposal includes 2no. buildings along with parking and landscaping and a widened access.

The employment buildings (made up of smaller units) will mainly have an industrial appearance with metal cladding panels to the exterior and a monopitch roof. The office building will have two wings and would be finished in a difference material of a light gold colour. The parking and landscaping would be arranged around the two building sections.

Assessment

Listed Building – Old Manor House

The site is in close proximity to a Grade II listed heritage asset – The Old Manor House.

The Old Manor House is located to the east of the development site. The site includes the house, along with an enclosed rear garden. The garden boundary and the eastern boundary of the site is separated by a small flatted development – No's 1-6 Manor Court and its associated parking area. The eastern boundary of the development site includes an established line of mature landscaping so intervisibility between the site and the house is very limited due to this screening. To the north of the building lies the Portsmouth water Company industrial buildings, including the historic tannery which has historical associations with the house. The setting to the north and west is mainly suburban and residential.

The application is accompanied by a detailed Heritage Statement by L-P Archaeology which assess the significance of the Old Manor House and how the proposal will impact upon that significance.

This concludes that the significance of Old Manor House lies principally in its architectural and historic interest and that the setting does contribute to its significance but mainly with the other historic buildings which lie to the north, rather than with the application site itself. Whilst there will be a change to the setting as a result of the proposed development, it would not be harmful to its significance.

The findings in regard to the Old Manor House are agreed with and it is considered that the impact on the significance of the designated heritage asset would be negligible.

Brockhampton Conservation Area

Part of the site (the extreme eastern part) falls within the Brockhampton Conservation Area. This is the section of land which links the existing Portsmouth Water site to the properties on Brockhampton Lane, some of which are non-designated heritage assets. This part of the site would include landscaping and the edge of the parking area. The character of the conservation area to the north of the development site is mainly verdant, with mature landscaping around the lake with the more modern office buildings to the north of these.

The heritage statement sets out the character of the conservation area and identifies key buildings within the CA and views in and out of the CA. The main historic buildings associated with the water works are set within the existing Portsmouth water site and Brockhampton Road. The development site does not fall within their settings. and are not visible from the development site

The statement also concludes that the development within the conservation area boundary, would not be harmful and would not affect any key views in or out of the CA.

Again these findings are agreed with and it is considered that the impact on the conservation area would be negligible.

Conclusion

No Objection.

R.McMurray

Senior Conservation Officer – 8/9/2021