

Heritage Assessment

The Old School
(former Bedhampton Arts Centre)
Bedhampton

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Heritage Statement has been prepared to support the following proposal:
Proposed alterations and change of use from Arts Centre (Class D2) to flats (Class C3)
- 1.2. This statement has been prepared by fusion|tp.
- 1.3. The site is located on the south side of Bedhampton Road within the local centre of Bedhampton.
- 1.4. The Old School (former Bedhampton Arts Centre) is a Grade II listed building noted for its architectural style and historic links to land use and local people.

2. Site Context

- 2.1. Bedhampton is a suburb of the town of Havant, divided by the railway line. It has been a settlement since AD 501 when the Saxons took possession of Portsmouth and the surrounding areas. The area has been in the hands of the Cathedral Church of Winchester and the crown in the 16th Century.
- 2.2. The local centre of Bedhampton centres around Bedhampton Road, which is a direct route between Havant Town Centre and the A3 (M). The historic village of Bedhampton is contained within the Old Bedhampton Conservation Area and is located between Bedhampton Road and the railway line.
- 2.3. There are numerous springs in the village, as seen by the prevalence of streams along the roads and in the fields. Many are known for their healing properties. The village is noted for its rural feel and hedgerows which enhance the landscape character.
- 2.4. Bedhampton Road currently is predominantly residential, although in the direct vicinity of the development site are several car dealerships, auto body shops and retail shops. There is a Grade II listed public house on the north side of Bedhampton Road.
- 2.5. The development site is on a rectangular plot of land. The listed building is surrounded on all sides by a tarmac car park. One corner of the land is a tree lined grassy area. In the southwest corner of the site is a brick outbuilding. A low brick wall is along the north boundary; parts of it have an iron railing. Two entrances onto Bedhampton Road are along this wall. The west boundary has an iron railing and a steep hill onto Kingscroft Lane. No entrances to the road are currently along this boundary. The listed building makes a dominant feature on the corner of Bedhampton Road and Kingscroft Lane. The low wall and railing allow for full visibility of the building and of the road for entering and leaving vehicles.

3. Conservation Guidelines

- 3.1. The development site is not within a conservation area, although it is close to the Old Bedhampton Conservation Area. Those buildings in the conservation area date from as early as the 12th century, and a church and two mills are mentioned in the Domesday Book. Most date from the 18th-19th Century and are in a typical village settlement with a church, mill house and manor house. Infill development has encroached on the historic setting, although the high hedgerows, brooks and trees maintain the village feel. The character of the conservation area has mainly remained unchanged.
- 3.2. The setting of the development site is within the developed area of Bedhampton, as a suburb of Havant. Its historic setting has been mostly lost through infill development to the

south and retail development to the east. To the west of the site, across the road, are residential houses and Bidbury Mead which contribute to the overall landscape of the town. The tyre shop to the east does not contribute positively to the setting of the listed building through its bulk and materials.

- 3.3. The existing rear garden and car park will be planted to provide the residents with communal amenity space, and each unit will have a private garden space. The car parking will be moved to the rear of the site.
- 3.4. Although the development site is not within the Old Bedhampton Conservation Area, the area north of the railway line has been identified as a site of archaeological importance. This would include the development site and as such, the County Archaeologist would need to be contacted if there are any potential archaeological issues.
- 3.5. The Old School is made of red brick in Flemish bond with decorative brick features and a clay tile roof with deep overhanging eaves. A prominent feature on the building is the northeast gable with blue brick diaper pattern and dovecote with a cross on the ridge. There are also large chimneys, some with moulded bricks, which add to the interest of the building. Also of note are the interesting gothic style windows which have canted upper panes. These decorative features contribute to the architectural character of the building which is the main significance behind the reason for listing.
- 3.6. In the interior of the building, the large classrooms with vaulted ceilings remain mainly intact with timber windows, timber herringbone pattern floors and chalkboards. The high ceilings of the rooms contribute to the sense of space and significance of the building. One of the rooms has already been partitioned off and all of the fireplaces have been blocked up.
- 3.7. There is a single storey extension with lanterns inserted between two of the classroom wings. The lanterns provide light and ventilation into this area which would otherwise be shaded by the high roofs on three sides. The extension is only visible from the east and the amended elevation would allow it to fit in better with the surrounding listed building whilst remaining subservient.
- 3.8. Another single storey flat roof extension to the rear of the building does not fit in well with the surrounding building due to inappropriate fenestration and the flat roof. It is proposed to alter this extension to include a window to match those elsewhere on the building and using a hipped roof to connect to the main building. This will then enhance the building compared to the existing. There are varying types of brick and bonds used throughout the building, so both extensions will match the brickwork next to it to further blend in to the existing building.
- 3.6. The other reason for listing is the local connection to the architect and benefactor. Richard William Drew was a London architect who went to Cambridge with William Stone, a local MP. Drew designed Stone's mansion, Leigh Park, now demolished, but the land is currently a housing estate and the Staunton Country Park. Drew was also married to Ann Bletchley Starey, architect William Butterfield's niece. Drew worked for architect Henry Woodyer and possibly Butterfield before setting up his own practice. This connection to famous architects may have influenced the design of the schoolhouse, as it is picturesque on all elevations. This has influenced the alterations to the building as the retaining and enhancement of the special characteristics of the building was a theme throughout the design process. A plaque from 1868 remains in one of the classrooms and will be preserved.

4. Policies

- 4.1. The relevant national policy is Section 12 of the NPPF.

Historic Environment

4.2. Section 12 Paragraph 131 of the NPPF refers to planning applications for heritage assets

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

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

Local Policies

- 4.3. Relevant policies from the Havant Core Strategy include CS11 and CS16. There is also a Borough Design Guide SPD for Bedhampton and the Havant Borough Townscape Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment (HBTLSA) 2007.
- 4.4. CS11 (Protecting and Enhancing the Special Environment and Heritage of Havant Borough) states that 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, et al.' It also states that 'the council will seek ways of ensuring that new development not only protects the borough's environmental assets but uses them to generate higher quality development.'
- 4.5. CS16 (High Quality Design) seeks development that 'identifies and responds positively to existing features of natural, historic or local character within or close to the proposed development site' and 'uses the characteristics of the locality to help inform the design of the new development including heights, massing, existing buildings lines, plot widths and depths, materials and proportions of windows and doors.'
- 4.6. The Borough Design Guide SPD identifies Bedhampton and Brockhampton as a residential suburb. They have typical suburban development with two-storey buildings, small gardens with low boundary walls or hedges. The Old School is identified as a notable building within the townscape. The Design Guide encourages the retention of the flint and brick boundary walls in addition to traditional architectural features on historic buildings.
- 4.7. The HBTLSA identifies the development site as being within the Historic Landscape 9.6.1- early-mid Victorian and in the Landscape Character Area 13- Historic Bedhampton. It mentions that the status of many of the historic buildings in Bedhampton caused them to be architect designed and therefore 'individually reflect the differing fashions of their time.'

5. Design

- 5.1. As stated above, the significance of the building is mainly on its architectural merits on the exterior of the building and the large classroom spaces within the interior.
- 5.2. The exterior will be largely unchanged apart from two extensions and a refacing of an existing extension. All of the new windows and doors have been designed to closely match the existing listed building in materials and style. The brickwork and roof tiles will be matched to the existing building as well. It is considered that the alterations to the exterior would preserve the character of the listed building.
- 5.3. The interior of the building has been altered through the insertion of extensions and the use as an arts centre. The three large classroom areas remain largely intact, however. The large windows and high spaces was identified as an example of Victorian school design and there was a desire to maintain that relationship. All of the flats within the schoolrooms retain a large open area to make the best use of the high ceilings and windows. Although first floors

have been inserted into two of the classrooms, they only cover part of the space. Thus, the trusses would still be visible and the height would be retained.

- 5.4. Some original features still exist within the building, although all of the fireplaces have been blocked up. The chimney stacks and the brick details of the fireplaces will be retained. Other details surrounding doors and windows will also be retained. There is still an original wood floor and a plaque located in the proposed unit 2. There could be original floors underneath the carpets in the other two classroom units. Any preservation of these could be maintained by condition if required.
- 5.5. The surrounding landscape would enhance the setting of the listed building better than the existing car park. Each of the units has a private exterior space and there is a large communal space to the east of the site. All of the car parking has been put in the rear of the site to reduce the visual impact the cars would have on the building and its setting.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1. It is considered that the proposed development would comply with local and national policies regarding listed buildings as the special architectural features of the building will be retained and the setting will remain unchanged.
- 6.2. In the context of local guidelines and policies, and the architectural and historical character of Bedhampton, it is respectfully requested that the Planning Authority grant planning permission for the proposed development.

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