



FAO: Planning Department,
North Herts Council

Ref: 24/01464/FP
Date: 21/11/2024

BUILT HERITAGE ADVICE

Dear Sir / Madam,

RE: Land to the east side of Maydencroft Gardens, Gosmore, Hertfordshire

Built Heritage Advice pertaining to an application for: Erection of two 3-bed semi-detached dwellings including cycle/garden store; parking and landscaping

The site is a small area of grassland that was previously used as part of a garden centre, enclosed within boundaries, to the rear of Maydencroft Lane. A previous planning application under reference 17/02289/1 was granted for eight houses immediately to the west of the site, which have now been completed.

The site is immediately to the south of the rear garden of Maydencroft Cottage, a Grade II listed house which dates from the seventeenth century. There does not appear to be a strong connection between the application site and Maydencroft Cottage and there are high hedges separating the two sites. However, as an area of open space immediately adjacent, the application site makes a neutral contribution to the setting of Maydencroft Cottage.

The site is just outside the southern boundary of Gosmore Conservation Area. The Conservation Area is centred on Hitchin Road and Maydencroft Road. The adopted Gosmore Conservation Area Character Statement (CACS) highlights the special interest of the Conservation Area, which includes its rural character, larger timber framed buildings including Maydencroft Cottage as a partially timber framed house encased in brick.

Views along streets are highlighted as contributing to the special character and this includes 'Key View 9' in looking east along Maydencroft Lane from near the front of Maydencroft Cottage. The Old Coach House just opposite Maydencroft Cottage is highlighted as a positive building within the Conservation Area. There is likely to be some limited visibility of the application site from Maydencroft Lane via the access road, with intervisibility of the front/side of Maydencroft Cottage. Although this would be in the context of the existing high boundary screening and the recent housing development, which has eroded the rural setting already.

The application site is adjacent to the housing development to the west which had eroded much of the rural character to the west of Maydencroft Cottage in the setting of the Conservation Area. However, there is a separation between the housing development and the more rural character of the land to the east, including the application site, although this is only likely to be clearly perceived from within the housing development/access road itself. To the south the application site is only separated from more open countryside by a post and rail fence and a swale and it appears more



connected to this rural setting than to the housing development. As such it makes a minor positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.

The proposal, which includes the housing itself and other domestic alterations, would diminish this rural character and sever the link between the application site and the wider setting of the Conservation Area. While increased boundary treatment and screening etc are proposed, the additional hardstanding for access, vehicle parking, etc would be harmful as it would have an urbanising effect on the setting of the Conservation Area.

This would result in less than substantial harm to the setting of the Conservation Area. However, based on the limited contribution the site currently makes to the setting of the Conservation Area, this impact would be at the lower end of less than substantial harm.

The physical and historic separation of the application site from Maydencroft Cottage and the previous development of the wider site for residential development is such that the impact on the listed building would be neutral or very minimal.

The proposal would have an acceptable impact on the significance of the listed building in accordance with Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, contrary to Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. With regards to the National Planning Policy Framework the level of harm is 'less than substantial' as per paragraph 208. 'Great weight' should be given to the heritage asset's conservation as per paragraph 205.

Yours sincerely,

David Buckley BA (Hons) MA MRTPI IHBC
Historic Environment Team
Place Services

Note: This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter