

# Sculpture at Painswhin House, Helhoughton

## Context, design and environmental impact

### Context - recent history

Three of my large steel sculptures were exhibited as part of the 2019 Glyndebourne season. One was sold and after the season ended, two were moved to our field in Helhoughton. At that time I had not understood that planning consent was required. I now understand that it is, at least for the largest sculpture, and so this application is being made retrospectively.

It is possible that the sculpture might be sold, which would seem to make a temporary application appropriate. However, it is more likely not to be, and we have become attached to it in its present location - and have been encouraged by the response of our immediate neighbours in the hamlet of Painswhin Farm. It therefore seems more suitable to make a full planning application.



## Context - the site

The site is a field to the south-east of Painswhin House, from which it is separated by a ha-ha. The field is designated as “countryside” on the NNDC Proposals Map. It is currently grazed by sheep.



Painswhin House is grade II listed as a “farmhouse. Mid C18.” (Listing NGR:TF85308263210.) The sculpture is 160m away from it and we believe does not materially affect its setting.

The field is separated from Rudham Road by a thick belt of mature trees, with an angled gap giving access from the road. There are individual groups of 25-year-old oaks within the field, with another wood on its north side.

## The sculpture



*Autumn*

The sculpture is made from self-weathering steel plates, often known as 'Corten' steel. The natural rusting of the steel forms a protective coat, by contrast with normal steel where the rust progresses ever deeper. The coating changes colour over time. Its orange-brown hue matches the autumn colour of the trees.



*Summer*

The steel plates are cut into triangles, which are welded together to form two twisting tripods, one placed on top of the other. The sculpture is 11.5m high. The triangles are 3m wide, so that the three points at ground level are 3m apart.

## This application

This application is made in the context of the "countryside" classification of the field. There is no change of use: the sheep still graze the field and use the sculpture for shelter, shade and as a scratching post.



The application is made within the recreation category, on the basis that the enjoyment of art is an important form of recreation\*. (We believe that this is true even of those who may be provoked by it: this too is an important function of artworks!)

The sculpture requires a rural location such as this, where there is sufficient space for its scale to be appreciated, and it can be perceived from varying distances. We should note that we have happily arranged access for any visitors who want to see it close up, and we intend to continue doing so.

*\*The Oxford English Dictionary defines recreation as "the action of recreating (oneself or another) or fact of being recreated by some pleasant occupation, pastime or amusement".*

## Environmental impact

The primary environmental impact of the sculpture is visual, as the steel can be recycled at the end of its life.

The work is visible from the public highway, though at some distance. The upper part of the sculpture can be seen above the hedges from Broomsthorpe Road, at a distance of about 800m (half a mile). (The photos are taken with the 'telephoto' lens of a mobile phone, because using a normal lens the sculpture is too small to be noticed.)



*View 1 from Broomsthorpe Road*



*View 2 from Broomsthorpe Road*

The sculpture is seen in the distance from where the road to Raynham rises above Helhoughton village. The sculpture is about 1.4km away:



It can also be glimpsed from a few points within the village, but the trees in the way prevented an adequate photo from being taken:



*View from opposite the playground*

It is also glimpsed as one climbs up the hill travelling west along Rudham Road from Helhoughton (the photos are taken in winter when it is most visible):



*View from Rudham Road*



*Closer view from Rudham Road*

The clearest and closest view is from Rudham Road, through the gap in the tree belt at the southern edge of the field where the sculpture is located:



## Summary

While it is true that from close quarters the sculpture has a strong presence, that is not the case as it is seen from the public realm, because of the distances involved. We would plead that it does no harm and seems to give interest and pleasure to many - and so should be allowed to stay, in a spirit of open-minded generosity.



## **Appendix - Nicholas Hare biography**

*Nicholas Hare is an architect-turned sculptor.*

*He was brought up in Norfolk and went to Norwich School, before taking a degree in Natural Sciences and English at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. For two years he was a sub-editor on the Times Literary Supplement, and then studied architecture at Liverpool University and University College, London.*

*He worked for the multi-disciplinary practice of Arup Associates, before becoming a Lecturer in Architecture at Cambridge University. After being a finalist in the 800-entry competition for the Opera Bastille, he set up the practice of Nicholas Hare Architects. The practice became known for projects in education and the arts.*

*Among many NHA university projects were those for Oxford (the Richard Doll Building), Cambridge (the Alison Richard and David Attenborough Buildings), Strasbourg (the European Doctoral College) and University College, London (most recently the new Student Centre, winner of a 2021 RIBA National Award). Works for the performing arts included Sadler's Wells Theatre, the Production Workshop and Costume Centre for the Royal Opera House and the new Production Hub for Glyndebourne.*

*In 2018 Hare retired from architectural practice to concentrate on his work as a sculptor. His work has been exhibited at the 2019 Glyndebourne Festival and the 2021 Grange Opera Festival, and at galleries in London and Wiltshire. His website is [www.nhsculpture.com](http://www.nhsculpture.com).*