



Heritage Assessment of site for proposed new Dwelling.
Meadowgate. Land to the East of Charles Court. EX8 5JU.

May 2023

Revised October 2023

Contents.

- 1.0 Purpose of statement and Methodology.
- 2.0 Description of the Site.
- 3.0 Conservation policies and guidance.
 - 3.1 Lympstone Conservation Area Management Plan (LCAMP),
Consideration.
- 4.0 Impact on Conservation area and Buildings with Heritage Significance.
- 5.0 Impact on the Church (GII*) and War memorial (GII).
- 6.0 Impact on The Mill. (GII)
- 7.0 Impact on the street side Grade Listed properties North of proposed site,
Church Road.
- 8.0 Lower ground floor.
- 9.0 Previous Application - Conservation Comments review.
- 10.0 Lympstone Parish Council.
- 11.0 Lympstone Neighbourhood Plan. 2013
- 12.0 Overall Impact of The Proposed Development, Green Wedge and
Sustainability considerations.
- 13.0 Mitigation of heritage impact.
- 14.0 Summary

1.0

Purpose of this Heritage Statement and Methodology.

This document is prepared to evaluate the effect of one new dwelling on Heritage assets and the wider Conservation Area. The architect's brief has been taken into consideration which includes description of style, proportion, materials, setting and vernacular.

This latest revision is to accommodate a lower ground floor only as part of the previously approved single dwelling (23/0847/FUL.

The land is within the conservation area of Lympstone.

This statement also considers:

- Heritage statements and conservation Officer comments of approved buildings within the same conservation area. (See applications for 18/2589/MFUL and 12/0147/FUL and 20/2733/FUL)*
- Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation areas) Act 1990,
- Lympstone Conservation area Appraisal and Management Plan. *
- Local and National Planning Policy Framework,
- East Devon Local Plan.*
- Feedback and comments of App 22/1583/ful

These Historic England documents have been followed in the production of this report;

- Advice Note 12 "Statements Heritage Significance" (October 2019)
- Good Practise in Planning Note 3 "The setting of Heritage Assets" (December 2017)
- Advice Note 3 "Making changes to heritage assets" (February 2016)
- Conservation Principles, Policy & Guidance (April 2008)

*Documents available of East Devon Website or Lympstone.org website.

All photos and Images have been taken at site visit and internet searches summer 2022.

2.0

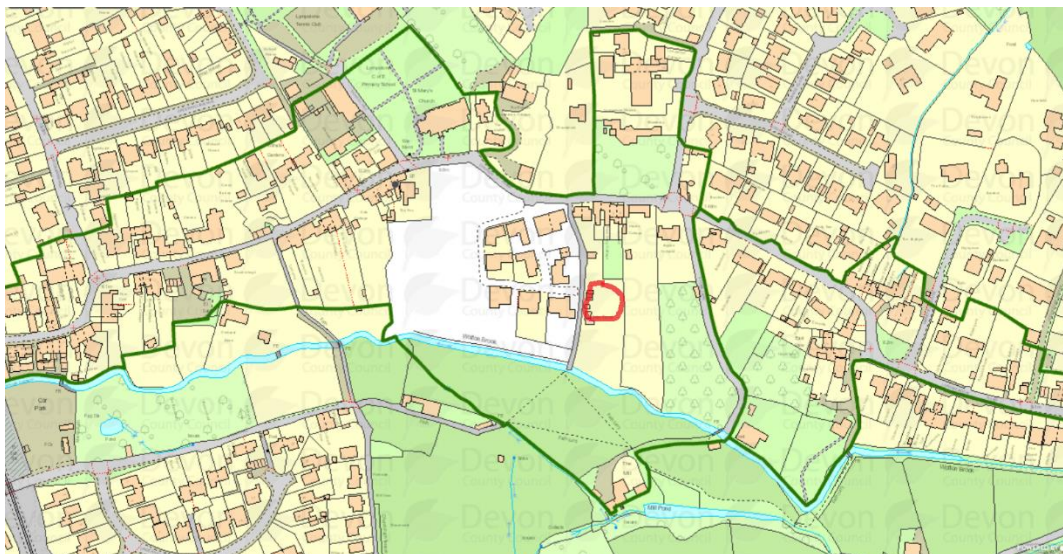
Description of the Site.

The site lies approximately 500m from the estuary edge. It is bordered by fencing to the North and West, by a bank and Wootton Brook to the South and mature hedge and Fence to the East.



Site proposal within red Circle.

Map Showing Centre of Lympstone Conservation Area with Site Marked in Red.



The site is owned in conjunction with the public footpath, known as Footpath One, colloquially known as Pig Lane, which borders the site to the west. To the North, and bordering Church Road is a row of 5 Grade II listed houses and 2 further houses not listed:

Meadowgate and Pebbles. Wotton Brook borders the site to the south with The Mill and Mill Field beyond. To the East and North lie garden and to the west, beyond the footpath are 10 new luxury dwellings of Charles Court, built on the former nursery site.

The proposed development is for a single dwelling and garage subordinate to the neighbouring new homes. The land is domestic garden laid mainly to lawn with greenhouse, shed storage and fruit trees and sheds for storage of items ancillary to domestic life. North, West and south borders have tree/hedge planting.

The former nursery to the West has recently been developed and offers some large premium houses constructed on partially raised ground, which is Green Wedge.

View from Church Steps (looking Southeast). Proposed site not visible.



View from site (looking Due West).



3.0

Conservation policies and guidance.

The development would fully comply with the relevant paragraphs of the national planning policy guidance NPPF paragraphs 189, 192, 200 which deal with the need to preserve the significance of heritage assets and avoid harm.

Paragraph 189 states: 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 when necessary, field-based evaluation.

P189: Analysis of the site has been more than sufficient so that the impact can be knowingly stated as minimal and that there is negligible impact. This is also to demonstrate that the

relevant Historic records have been consulted and that no further assessment is necessary because there is no Heritage Asset on the site.

*P192: 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 their conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality.

C) Where desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

P192: In consideration of these points the development is secluded such that outward impact is negligible. However, careful design and rigorous execution of a high-level development will add to the natural growth and evolution of the area, making a positive complement to the architectural variety, that is so common in the Village.

P200: Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset or which better reveal its significance should be treated favourably.

P200: This sensitive proposal contributes to the wider Conservation area and is seen to have negligible harm to Heritage Assets.

3.1

Lympstone Conservation Area Management Plan (LCAMP), Consideration.

Note: (In quoting this document from the Lympstone website it should be noted that some paragraphs have been miss-numbered and duplicate numbers are used.)

The growth of Lympstone over the centuries from its early days as a linear fishing and boat building community is well documented. Lympstone is now a thriving village with a diverse accumulation of facilities and amenities, clubs, groups and organisations involved in a huge range of interests and only possible because of its growth to what there is today.

The design of this proposal respectfully considers this document and in particular Paragraph 3.2 and 3.4 (the Second one – paragraphs are mis-numbered and 3.4 is used twice!).

Paragraph 3.2 states: In terms of urban grain or the layout of buildings within the conservation area its distinctive character is contributed by dense terraces of properties located hard against the rear of the highway in many cases. The Strand is almost a continuous terrace with narrow breaks. Further away from the estuary and historic heart of the village the grain is more fragmented and the spaces between groups of buildings are very important to the character of the conservation area.

New development should be consistent with this and new buildings need to follow the footprint depth of neighbouring properties in addition to following the trend of building height and numbers of floors. Development that follows suburban layouts or does not appear coherent with the urban grain of the conservation area should be strongly resisted.

Paragraph 3.4 (the second one!) Contemporary design in the historic environment can add vibrancy and variety while respecting the form and character of surrounding traditional architecture. It is often considered that a first-class contemporary approach incorporating good quality materials and finishes that will stand the test of time is a more honest contribution to the growth and evolution of a historic settlement. There are examples of markedly contemporary architecture in Lympstone and one example of these would be included within the proposed western extension to the conservation area. This approach may also be valid in some more sensitive historic contexts where a pastiche design approach is considered inappropriate. This design approach is very often controversial and should be remembered that some historic buildings in Lympstone were at the height of contemporary fashion when they were constructed. New design should take a lead from local architectural traditions and distinctiveness and should be site specific using materials that reflect the character of the area and that stand the test of time.

This development is some 500m from the estuary and lies in the more “fragmented” (Para3.2) area away from the mostly solid run of terraces, where the Charles Court attenuation pond now draws Deer regularly for drinking and Green space besides, Mill Field, Footpath 1 and large gardens surrounding provide open spaces, and glimpses of scenery as caught walking the area. This proposal sits subordinate to Charles Court and is nestled in nature and continues the fragmented character and flow of the dwellings yet contrasts the sub-urban layouts which would appear incoherent with the urban grain of the conservation area.

The design specifies sensitive use of materials of a sustainable high quality (Para 3.4) which is a valid approach given that a pastiche context of this design would be considered inappropriate in this setting. Older historic buildings in Lympstone would have been considered very controversial at the time of their design and construction. Yet through good material choices and detail they have stood the test of time and are now worthy of preserving. This site-specific design follows the progression of architecture and material that will last. Similar examples of contemporary fashion can be seen within the conservation area and are considered a more honest contribution to the growth and evolution of a historic settlement.

4.0

Impact on Conservation area and Buildings with Heritage Significance.

The Site is not visible from the road and once completed, the development will scarcely be seen from this viewpoint.

This proposed development is specifically detailed and designed to maximise its empathy with its surroundings, to harmonise as far as is possible with its environment and to blend

sympathetically with the immediate vernacular taking design and materials to achieve this, as do the further details of textures, setting and planting. The low level, unobtrusive nature of the dwelling will sit discreetly in its environment, tucked away. When considered in the wider context the dwellings of Charles Court, constructed on the raised bank of the former nursery site impose significantly on the surroundings and shield this site from much of the influence it may have once exerted.

5.0

Impact on the Church (GII*) and War memorial (GII).

Line of sight from the Church to the site, is some 150-200m. The Charles Court houses sit on raised ground, wholly and directly between this proposal and the Church such that the proposed new dwellings will not be visible from the Church. To glimpse the top of the church tower is possible from the site. (See photo). This does not constitute an impact of one upon the other. The labyrinth of paths and access to this site contribute to the curiosity created by fragmented views and imaginative buildings glimpsed as journeyed through.

The War memorial sits roadside and subordinate to the Church and is further hidden from view.



View of the Church Tower from the proposed site looking Northwest. (View from the Church towards the site shown above.)

**See also photographs in Section 2 of this report for other aspects of view.*

6.0

Impact on The Mill.

The Mill is set apart from other houses in the village and its surroundings are very rural. There is a picturesque Vista of The Mill between the trees from the site and the return view would have minimal impact as the sympathetic materials, proportion and gardens would provide adequate screening to break any continuous views. Between the Mill (GII) and proposed site, lies Wotton Brook and Mill Field. Now laid to meadow, this field was used for dairy cattle and now provides public footpath through meadow. The north Wotton Brook bank, within the curtilage of the site, has been planted with 150 trees/hedging of native species to provide better privacy for the owner's garden. The neighbouring Charles Court Development is of significantly proportioned houses constructed on a raised bank noticeably between the Church and The Mill this proposal would, by comparison, be unobtrusive and discrete. The measured distance between the site and The Mill is approximately 220 to 250 meters. For Heritage purposes, there is minimal impact of one upon the other.

View of the Mill from the proposed site.



7.0

Impact on the street side Grade II Listed properties North of proposed site, Church Road.

Haymore Thatch, Town Dairy Cottage, No's 1 & 2 Laureldale, and Hares.

These properties are Grade two Listed buildings and from the road it is only possible to view them obliquely due to the narrow nature of the road. These are quaint cottages, that have no footpath and only a single track road to the front and their terraced nature reflects those to western side of the nursery/Charles Court and act as book-ends to the modern development between them. Of these properties, two are thatched – one a former shop, two have a shallow Bay to the front. Each has had varying levels of improvement and modernisation applied which can be visible upon inspection and overshadows the efforts made for genuine heritage maintenance. Particularly from the rear, which is the aspect

witnessed from the proposed site, the alterations are sadly lacking respect to the originality the buildings. This takes the form of UPVC windows and conservatories, Dormer windows – which detract from the authenticity of these houses. As there is some 50-60 meters between the rear of these houses and the new site, with fencing and semi-mature trees breaking the view, there is limited visible impact when the nature of the new proposal is low-level and nature friendly.

View from the bottom of Strawberry Hill toward Site entrance.



View looking North to Rear of Streetside Listed Buildings from Site.

8.0 This improvement to the property is the addition of living space on a lower ground floor. This modification takes advantage of the lie of the land and will require modest ground scaping to incorporate. It is planned that this level is to be landscaped underneath the already approved plan with no alteration to the heights or appearance of this approved scheme. The lower ground floor will only be visible from the south, where views of this

elevation are fleeting and distant from the path which is the other side of Wooton Brook and masked by dense bushes and hedges.

The modest size and proportion of the approved dwelling in relation to its plot, is such that the property can easily afford this addition and will, indeed, offer greater flexibility of living space with insignificant impact.

This will be achieved by using cut and fill principal and otherwise will make no difference to the size, height or other dimensions other than to increase floor space by utilising the slope of the land to gain this additional area underneath the current approved plan. 23/0847/FUL.

9.0 Previous Application - Conservation Comments review. 23/0847/FUL

Approved.

10.0

Lympstone Parish Council.

LPC should consider this low level, environmentally considerate and carefully designed scheme with an open mind now that the significant proportions of Charles Court have fully obscured this site from Church Road. Further, when considering the Built up Area Boundary, LPC describe the “carefully designed scheme” of Charles Court to justify the encroachment of the development beyond an Arbitrary boundary line (Comment Date 5th Apr 2019).

11.0

Lympstone Neighbourhood Plan. 2013

In this ‘Made’ document, it describes this site as ‘Land south of Town Dairy’ however, it is the same plot, this being ‘Land South of Meadowgate’. Scoring a 14.9 points out of a possible 20 that ranks 5th out of a possible 20 proposed sites possible for suitable development. The four higher scoring plots have now all been developed. (ref: *lympstone.org*)

Given the transitional stage the Local Plan is experiencing there is currently scope to widen the considerations to incorporate in-fill development. There is a noticeable shortage of sites in the 5 year land availability plan for housing.

12.0

Overall Impact of The Proposed Development, Green Wedge and Sustainability.

The guidance on heritage assets set out in the National Planning Policy Framework requires any harm to the significance of heritage assets to be considered. The existence and level of

harm can be quite difficult to define, as harm is clearly not the same as change and because the development can frequently offer a combination of harm and benefits.

In this case it is clear that the proposed development would not lead to changes in the setting of any heritage assets due to its visual obscurity. Accordingly, if built to a high standard the proposed layout, materials and architectural language of the new house would make an important long term positive contribution to the village aggregation of architectural inputs which would outweigh the loss of any of its rural character.

In general it is considered that the proposed development would not pose significant detriment or harm to the heritage assets because of the distant proximity. This addition would tastefully contribute to the variety of houses within the conservation area and demonstrate honest evolution of the village.

Further, the land must be considered 'Brown Field'. I refer you to the Court of Appeal Judge in the case of *Dartford Borough Council vs Secretary of State for communities and local government &ORS 2017*.

The case summary states * The development of previously developed land is actively encouraged in the National Planning Guidance. The NPPF notes : "*Planning policies and decisions should encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has previously been developed (Brownfield land) provided that s is not of high environmental value.*" Without quoting the case in depth, it specifies that private residential gardens, allotments etc are brownfield – whether or not they are within the built up area.

The draft new emerging Local Plan (2023) refers to Green Wedge and wants to primarily insulate against coalescence, and this application accommodates these considerations, as it does not diminish the Green Wedge either by its physical extent or by visual intrusion.

The Green Wedge is further supported by this site as the existing trees (over 400 planted in the last 10 years) and additional planting to support this development, provide a wildlife Xanadu.

Village, Local and National planning directives are keen to embrace a sustainable future and this site is within easy walk of Lymptone Station, is on the coastal path and 'Sustrans' cycle route and placed to be convenient to local shops, post office and other village amenities.

In sum, the location is sustainable and supportive of its local community. It is within the physical extent of the village and will be unobtrusive.

13.0

Mitigation of heritage impact.

The design of the proposed development is reassuring in that it appears to have evolved from an informed and sympathetic understanding of the character of Lymptone and the vast array of housing styles therewithin. Aspects of the Charles Court development and discussion of materials, proportion and setting are exploited with this proposal as it is an acceptable architectural conversation. It has been shown that there is little to no harm caused by this development yet the architectural curiosity of this carefully considered design bring fresh thought to the evolution of the village-scape.

14.0

Summary.

This application seeks to add a basement level to an already approved designed App 23/0847/FUL.

Current Local plan review poses flexibility in what is deemed favourable or unfavourable and together with the 5 year land availability shortage, low level 'harm' and architectural contribution, this application should be favourably considered.

References to any and all contributor comments regarding this and neighbouring sites are made in the context of Heritage, because, if the impact of other nearby sites can be mitigated so convincingly in so many contexts, it would be difficult, in good conscience, to inhibit a sympathetic scheme such as this.