

LANDSCAPE APPRAISAL/STUDY

COURT GREEN

ST ANNES HILL, MIDHURST, WEST SUSSEX, GU29 9NN

PROPOSED OFF STREET PARKING



Front (East) Elevations taken from St Annes Hill

The Site

Court Green is a Grade II listed detached two-storey property positioned on the southern side of St Anne's Hill in Midhurst. The property is the final dwelling on St Anne's Hill which leads to an area of wooded public space further east also called St Anne's Hill. The property, dating back to C18 or earlier, is of brick, stone and tile construction with tile-hung elevations at first floor level. The North elevation of the main house fronts directly onto the street but occupies a spacious plot with a large garden to the rear. To the west of the main house lies a garage building linked to the main house via a brick front wall, which ensures the rear amenity area of the plot remains private from the street. The front (East elevation) of the main house faces St Anne's Hill. This part of garden is sub-divided with a stone wall separating the

formal garden for the area of neglected land that has the vehicular access rights. This area also forms part of the grounds to the Ancient Monument

Summary

The Landscape Appraisal/study will accompany the Application for Scheduled Planning and listed buildings consent for the upgrade of the parking area, crossover, gates, and fences at the head of St Anne's Hill Road. The works will involve the creation of a new pedestrian access through the existing Fittleworth stone wall. The stone wall will be returned into the house with a new cast iron pedestrian gate. New gates and Breeden gravel crossover into the Motte and Bailey Castle.

The site is identified on the Location and Block Plan 1523-AMC-00 Rev C

This proposal aims to make efficient and effective use of the building and grounds within an established residential area, in a manner which is compatible with the character and appearance of the area.

It is considered that the proposed alterations and additions will make a positive contribution to the character of the area, without causing any harm to the asset.

Schedule of works

Should the proposal be approved, my client will carry out all the improvement works at his expense. The schedule of works is split into four areas as follows.

Fences and Gates: The existing vehicular and pedestrian gets at the head of St Annies Hill Road are in poor condition and will be removed. New Oak gates will be provided to the parking area and Motte and Bailey Castle. The Fittleworth stone wall will be returned into the house with a new cast iron pedestrian gate on the boundary between Courts Green and St Annes Hill road as shown on drawings 1523-AMC-01E, 1523-AMC-02E, 1523-AMC-03D and 1523-AMC-04A.



Vehicular cross over: The existing vehicular and pedestrian crossover is in very poor condition. The suggested proposal is the extend the existing road Tarmac into the crossover.



Parking Area: The parking area needs to be tided and finished to allow vehicle use. The ground level falls away from the crossover therefore there will be very little dig.

The suggested proposal is to finish the area with Breedon 'Graphite Granite' self binding gravel on MOT Type 1 with Granite sets all retained with a low level Fittleworth Stone wall



Fittleworth Stone wall: To improve access to the house the proposal is to remove approximately 1m of the stone wall to allow a pedestrian access to the house. The wall will be carefully taken down and stones used to edge and retain the parking area as shown on the drawings.



Pre-Application Advice

We have had formal discussions with the Midhurst Town Council and Historic England. We have also researched the Ancient Monuments and had informal discussions with the Midhurst Museum. Ancient Monuments Consent was issued on 9th October 2023

Ancient Monuments and Heritage Assets affected by the proposal.

Two heritage assets will be potentially impacted by the proposed scheme, the Scheduled castle on St. Anne's Hill, and the Listed dwelling of Court Green.

The Motte and bailey castle on St Ann's Hill, Midhurst (No. 1012176, first Scheduled 28th Sept 1954) is still rather poorly understood. Significant archaeological investigations of this castle have been limited to those by Sir William St John Hope in 1913 and then those by the Chichester District Archaeological Unit in 1994. The latter, while identifying more than one phase to the castle's development, was unable to recover evidence of their dating, with the published monograph merely suggesting an 11th century origin, with later modifications (Magilton J. & Thomas S. 2001 **Midhurst**, Chichester District Council, p.21 & 41). The castle was composed of an inner and outer bailey, with the gateway to the latter suggested to lie at the eastern end of the lane St Ann's Hill (*Ibid.* p.42), where the existing entrance is today. A section of the outer bailey ditch is said to run south from this point, through part of the curtilage of Court Green (*Ibid.*, p.42) and there is indeed a depression here that begins c.10m to the south of the existing castle site entrance. It is not known what form the castle gateway might have taken, should it have existed in this location, but it may have begun as a timber structure before potentially being upgraded to stone. It would seem from the contours that in front of it lay a simple causeway between the two termini of the outer bailey ditch, rather than a bridge, although this is not certain.

Court Green is itself a Grade II Listed Building (No.1216735, first Listed 26th Nov 1987), described in the Listing description as 18th century or earlier. The presence of some externally visible timber framing would suggest pre-18th century origins. It faces towards the castle site, with its northern gables fronting St. Ann's Hill, although only the upper part of the front elevation can be seen from the east.

The proposals are for the upgrade of a parking area to the east of the house, which currently lies between the evergreen hedge that separates the property from the castle site, and a Lower Greensand wall that divides it off from the rest of the garden. The approach to the castle site currently runs along St. Ann's Hill, past Court Green on the right, followed by a close boarded fence, before reaching a five-bar gate, with smaller pedestrian side gate, through which the visitor must pass before entering the outer bailey. Underfoot, to the west of this gate, is the tarmacked road, while on its eastern side is an earth path, trending to mud in the wetter months, flanked by grass. The entrance to the existing parking area lies on the

south side immediately after passing through the gate and is separated from the castle site by a five-bar gate.



Figure 1 The existing parking area lies to the left, behind the five-bar gate and adjoining evergreen hedge, with the Listed Court Green behind.

The proposals would involve the replacement of the existing fence and five-bar gate with an extension of the stone wall to return into the house at the same height with the addition of a cast iron pedestrian gate.

The tarmac surface of St Ann's Hill would be continued up to the line of the evergreen hedge with Breedon 'Graphite Granite' self binding gravel on MOT Type 1 with Granite sets. The existing gates forming the entrance to the castle site would be relocated at the edge of the extended road.

It is considered that this new framing of the entrance to the castle site would be an improvement on what currently exists: the existing southern boundary, which currently consists of a close-boarded fence and five-bar gate, would be simplified, presenting instead a uniform appearance, with no visibility through to the parking area (and any cars present)



Figure 2 The existing entrance to the castle site (through the five-bar gate and adjoining pedestrian gate) looking eastwards along St. Ann's Hill, with Court Green to the right

In terms of groundwork, within the scheduled area the new fence with its gates will utilise the existing post-hole against the evergreen hedge and insert one new one to mount the eastern of the two gates. The new stone wall will require a 600mm wide by 600mm deep foundation but this will be outside the scheduled area. The parking area itself, together with the new crossover to the north, will require the reduction of the ground within its footprint to the surface of the subsoil in order to allow for an adequate sub-base, with a low Fittleworth stone retaining wall erected at its southern end. It is anticipated that the ground reduction will be no more than 300mm, including the footings for the retaining wall. It is suggested that a condition for an archaeological watching brief would be the most sensible mitigation for this, with suitable provisions being included within its Written Scheme of Investigation to allow for adjustments to the scheme should any significant remains be found.

All materials and details will match existing and therefore be in keeping with the age and character of a building. The proposal will safeguard and enhance the Listed Building.

Works are located on the boundary of the Ancient Monument away from the Castle, Inner and Outer Bailey. Although technically within the grounds they are located South of the Wharf footpath and adjacent to the Garden Allotments that are also within the grounds.



Affected, Impact and Conservation of the Ancient Monuments and Heritage Assets

The works will require a maximum dig of 300mm to allow for hardcore MOT type 1 sub-base and finishes. The works are within the grounds of the Ancient Monument, but away from the Castle, Inner and Outer Bailey.