

HERITAGE STATEMENT

ADDRESS: Foxwold, Pipers Lane, Brasted Chart

JOB NAME: **Foxwold**

JOB NO: **696**

1 Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by ReForm Architects in support of planning application (Ref: 22/01105/HOUSE). It is to be read in conjunction with the Design and Access statement.

The Heritage Statement will focus on how the proposals described in the planning application have positively addressed policies relating to Heritage. It will provide an assessment of heritage significance, details of the proposed works and an assessment of impact.

The estate is comprised of Foxwold House, the Coach House, and the Lodge, all in the ownership of the Conway Family. Foxwold House, The Coach House & Former Stables are Grade II Listed; the Lodge is not listed. Following planning refusal from Sevenoaks District Council for retrospective approval of a new closeboard fence on a portion of the site boundary, the client would like to propose an amended design considering the concerns about the impact on the green belt, listed buildings, AONB, street scene and public right of way, as outlined in Sevenoaks District Council's Pre-Application Advice Letter (Ref:PA/23/00196). The proposal replaces the previous closeboard fence with a shorter galvanised steel mesh fence and native hedge.

2 Assessment of Heritage Significance

The site is within the setting of two listed buildings.

Foxwold is a Grade-II listed house dated 1883, designed by Sir Alexander Stenning in the Arts and Crafts style. The asymmetrical house is of brick in Flemish bond with sandstone window dressings, sections of timber framing with plastered infill and tile-hanging with bands of plain and fish scale tiles, with a tiled roof with five tall, ribbed brick chimneystacks. A formal garden and terracing lie to the north with extensive lawn and pond to the east, an outbuilding to the west and wooded area runs along the western boundary of the site. The house is approached from a long driveway to the north.

To the south of the main house are the former stables and coach house, which are separately listed at Grade II. They were built in 1883 in a Vernacular Revival style by Sir Alexander Stenning. The external walls are of red brick in Flemish bond with either tile-hung or timber-framed with plastered infill at first floor. The tiled roof has tall chimney stacks and an octagonal cupola. The building is approached from a driveway off Pipers Lane. The buildings are set within a landscaped garden which is surrounded by woodland and the wider countryside. The siting of the main house, its associated buildings and its designed grounds were carefully considered to take advantage of and connect into the wider rural landscape. The band of trees and planting running along this boundary of the Estate seemingly lead across into the Valence Woods. The special interest of these buildings lies in their high-

quality design and association with the architect Sir Alexander Stenning, as well as the historic fabric.



Foxwold House Postcard from 1959



Site within Context

Context

Foxwold Estate lies within Brasted Chart, a hamlet within the civil parish of Brasted. It lies to the south of Brasted and the north of Four Elms. There are numerous Grade II listed buildings other than those at Foxwold. All the buildings at neighbouring Outridge Farm (owned by the National Trust) have Grade II listed building status.

Chart Lane leads to another hamlet called Toys Hill to the south, which has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest because of its abundant wildlife, and much of it is recognised as a Grade I site of national importance for nature conservation.

The site sits within the Metropolitan Green Belt and is in the Kent Downs (AONB). The fencing would be located near the Great Wood area of Ancient Woodland and lies within the Greensand Heaths & Commons Biodiversity Opportunity Area.

History

Foxwold is a classic late Victorian Arts & Crafts style country house. Built of Flemish bond with sandstone window dressings, the asymmetrical house even retains its William Morris wallpaper. The house is surrounded by 205 acres of gardens laid out in 1912. The woodland surrounding the house was badly damaged by a storm in October 1987, during which the man-made pond was destroyed.



(Left) Foxwold House in 1904



(Right) Foxwold House and Woodlands before the storm of 1987

Western Boundary

The proposed fence will sit along the Western boundary of the estate. Historically, the southern part of this boundary was used as an entrance to the Coach House and Stables through a small drive and gate, considered a secondary entrance. The main entrance gate (pictured below) gave the first impression of the property and showed the social status of the house and its owner. The rest of the boundary was made up of woodlands which acted as a barrier between the road and the estate.



(Left) Main Entrance gate to the North of Foxwold Estate

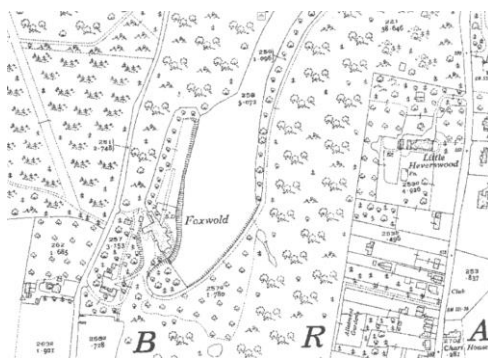
(Right) Aerial view of Foxwold in 1946 showing woodland to western boundary



1871-1890



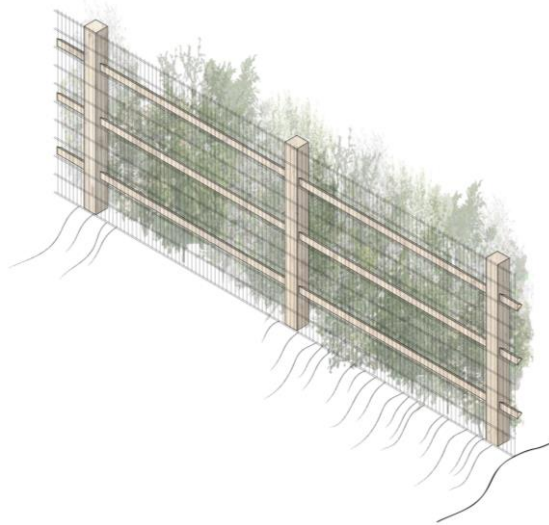
1897-1923



1929-1952



Current

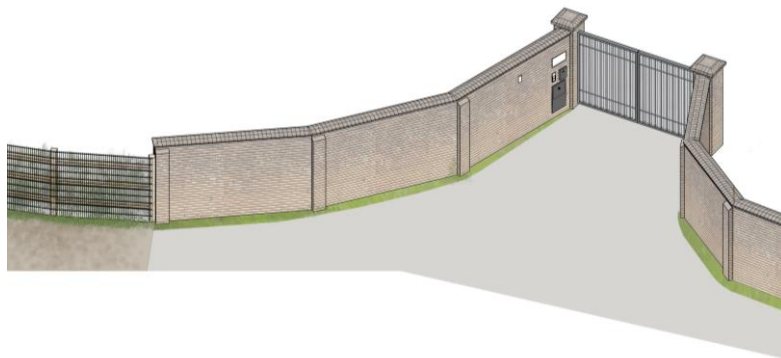


Proposed fence with wire mesh and native hedge

The boundary on which the proposed fence sits was historically barriered by woodland and borders an unmetalled path. The design aims to soften the fence's visual impact, blending into and preserving the woodland and landscape surrounding the listed buildings.

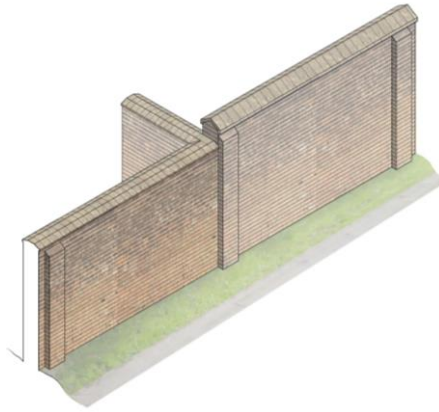
The proposal retains the vertical and horizontal posts of the existing closeboard fence with galvanised steel twin wire mesh on the front side for a more permeable and open appearance. A native hedge will be planted behind the fence and allowed to grow through the wire. The native hedge consists of a planting mix providing a mix of colours and habitat for biodiversity and a mix of deciduous, leaf retaining and evergreen, planted in a double staggered row at 60cm apart with rows 45cm apart as per AONB guidance.

To avoid presenting an impenetrable barrier for the movement of wildlife, it is proposed to have a series of hedgehog gaps along the length of the fence. Care will be taken to minimise damage to any trees located on the boundary.



Proposed steel gate with brick columns and brick wall to match existing

The gate proposal for the entrance to the Coach House is in keeping with its historic hierarchy with the main gate which should remain higher in status. The Coach House gate was considered a secondary, more private entrance, so we have proposed a simple gate with steel frame, vertical rods and corrugated steel to the rear for privacy, with brick columns matching the existing brick boundary wall at the south of the site.



Proposed brick wall (left) connecting to existing brick wall (right)

We have proposed a brick returning wall from the columns, connecting to the existing boundary wall to the South, and giving way to the steel mesh fence to the North. The proposed wall will use Flemish bond, red imperial bricks and special brick coping, with brick piers to match the existing. The wall will provide a more formal boundary leading up to the rear gate and paved driveway, preserving its historic use as the rear entrance to the estate.

4 Conclusions

All proposed work to the boundary at Foxwold is in line with the Council's recommended guidelines and is aimed to improve permeability, appearance and suitability of the previously built fences and gates. The proposals are in keeping with the character of the rest of the estate and Conservation Area.

The location of the proposed fence on the western boundary of the estate, among bushes and trees, means that it will not be readily seen from the Listed Buildings and will have little impact on the heritage assets. The proposed brick wall and gate to the Coach House will be in keeping with the appearance of the listed elements and will preserve its use as a secondary entrance to the estate. The proposed wire mesh fence and native hedge will improve the fence's permeability whilst preserving the woodland and landscape surrounding the listed buildings of the estate.