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HERITAGE STATEMENT

In respect of

**Land at the rear of Sheepleas, Epsom Road,
West Horsley**

On behalf of

BlackOnyx Projects Limited

AHC REF: SW/10262

Date: March 2024

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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report has been prepared and written by Sarah Watt, MCIfA, Director of Asset Heritage Consulting Ltd, on behalf of BlackOnyx Projects Ltd. Its purpose is to provide an assessment of the potential impact on the historic built environment of developing part of the extensive garden associated with Sheepleas, an unlisted building on Epsom Road in West Horsley, with five new dwellings.
- 1.2 The site is not within or adjoining any conservation area but is in proximity to a number of statutorily listed buildings. This report therefore considers the relationship of the site to the settings of the listed buildings identified, before going on to assess the potential impact upon these heritage assets of developing the site in the manner proposed.
- 1.3 The assessment of setting is implicitly based on the guidance provided by Historic England in *The Setting of Heritage Assets. Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3* ('GPA3'; 2nd edn December 2017). This document explains that setting is not itself a heritage asset; its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset or to the ability to appreciate that significance. As the PPG accompanying the NPPF amplifies, an assessment of the impact on setting needs to take into account the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it.
- 1.4 The staged approach to the assessment of setting outlined in the guidance is implicitly followed here. Those heritage assets with the potential to be affected by the proposed development are identified (Stage 1); the contribution of the settings of the assets to their significance (and/or to the ability to appreciate that significance) is assessed (Stage 2); the effects of the proposed development on that significance or on the ability to appreciate it are assessed (Stage 3); and the mitigation of any identified harm is considered (Stage 4).
- 1.5 This two-part approach of properly understanding significance and then evaluating the potential impact of proposals upon it is in line with good conservation and planning practice advocated in English Heritage's (as was)

Conservation Principles (2008) and formally expressed in the government's policies on conserving and enhancing the historic environment set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and supported by the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

2.0 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The application site lies at the eastern edge of West Horsley, close to the parish boundary with East Horsley and close to residential development within the latter. It is the western one of two (originally three) development plots carved out of land formerly part of the West Horsley Place estate in the 1930s, and is part of dispersed development along the section of Epsom Road that runs between the southern ends of the West Horsley and East Horsley village centres.
- 2.2 West Horsley Place, a Grade I listed manor house with origins in 1425, stands within an estate of 380 acres north of Epsom Road (much reduced from its original proportions), comprising arable and pasture fields, semi-improved pockets of grassland and interlinking woodland, as well as formal gardens close to the house, and Place Farm south-east of the house. The estate encompasses most of the land between the developed areas of West and East Horsley, extending to Epsom Road in the south (excluding the application site and the neighbouring property, Glenview) and to the railway in the north.
- 2.3 West Horsley Place has a long and detailed history and has had many interesting owners. Only a brief summary of that history is given here in order to provide an understanding of the significance of the building and its historical context.
- 2.4 Although there has been a manor house on the estate since soon after the Norman Conquest, the core of the present house is a timber-framed early 15th-century hall house. In 1536, this house was seized by Henry VIII and given to his cousin Henry Courtenay. He soon fell out of favour and, unfortunately for him, was beheaded in 1539 on the orders of the king.
- 2.5 In 1547, Henry gifted the estate to Sir Anthony Browne and Lady Elizabeth Fitzgerald (the 'fair Geraldine of the Earl of Surrey's Sonnets). Browne died in 1548 and Lady Elizabeth and her second husband, Lord Clinton, first Earl of Lincoln and Lord High Admiral to Elizabeth I were in occupation until 1590 (Elizabeth I stayed at the house for a week in 1559). However, the Browne family remained in possession of the estate until 1642.

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- 2.6 Between 1642 and 1664 it was owned by Carew Raleigh, youngest son of Sir Walter Raleigh and Lady Bess Throckmorton (inherited by Carew from Sir Nicholas Throckmorton). It is not entirely clear whether it was Raleigh or the Viscounts Montague of the Browne family before him who had West Horsley Place refaced, according to the latest architectural fashions, with the fine long red-brick façade with central Dutch gable still present today; this was simply screwed to the original Tudor-era timbers without having any structural function. Raleigh is known to have spent £2000 upgrading the house, so it may well have been him who was responsible for these works and for flooring over the medieval hall and inserting the main staircase.
- 2.7 Following the death of Carew's sons and granddaughter from pestilence in 1660, West Horsley Place was sold in 1664 to Sir Edward Nicholas (Secretary of State to both Charles I and II), for £9750. The Nicholas family were in possession of the estate between 1664 and 1749, followed by the long ownership of the Westons, from 1749 to 1921. Henry Weston's marriage in 1747 to Ann Copperthwaite, the illegitimate only child of William Nicholas, resulted in the latter leaving his estate to Henry in 1749.
- 2.8 West Horsley Place was let to tenants until 1790, when Henry Perkins Weston (son of Henry Weston) and his second wife moved into the property. He died in 1826 and the property was inherited by Ferdinand Fullerton Weston, who died in 1835.
- 2.9 Ferdinand's brother, Charles Weston had succeeded his cousin Weston Fullerton as rector of St Mary's Church in 1816, having been curate since 1804, and moved into the late 14th-century old Parsonage House, off The Street. When he became lord of the manor in 1835, he leased West Horsley Place to the banker, Henry Currie.
- 2.10 The tithe map of 1839 (**Fig.1**) records the owner of the large rectangular field of which the application site and adjoining property now form a part as being in the ownership of the Rev. Charles Weston and the occupation of (tenanted by) John William Tice (who, from Place Farm, farmed much other land on the estate). The field (plot no.166) was called Stirrups Piece Fields and was in arable cultivation. There was a chalk pit in its south-eastern corner (now beneath the garden of

Sheepleas' neighbour, Glenview). The eastern boundary of the field was coincident with the parish boundary between West and East Horsley, with land to the east in East Horsley owned by the Right Hon. William King, Earl of Lovelace.

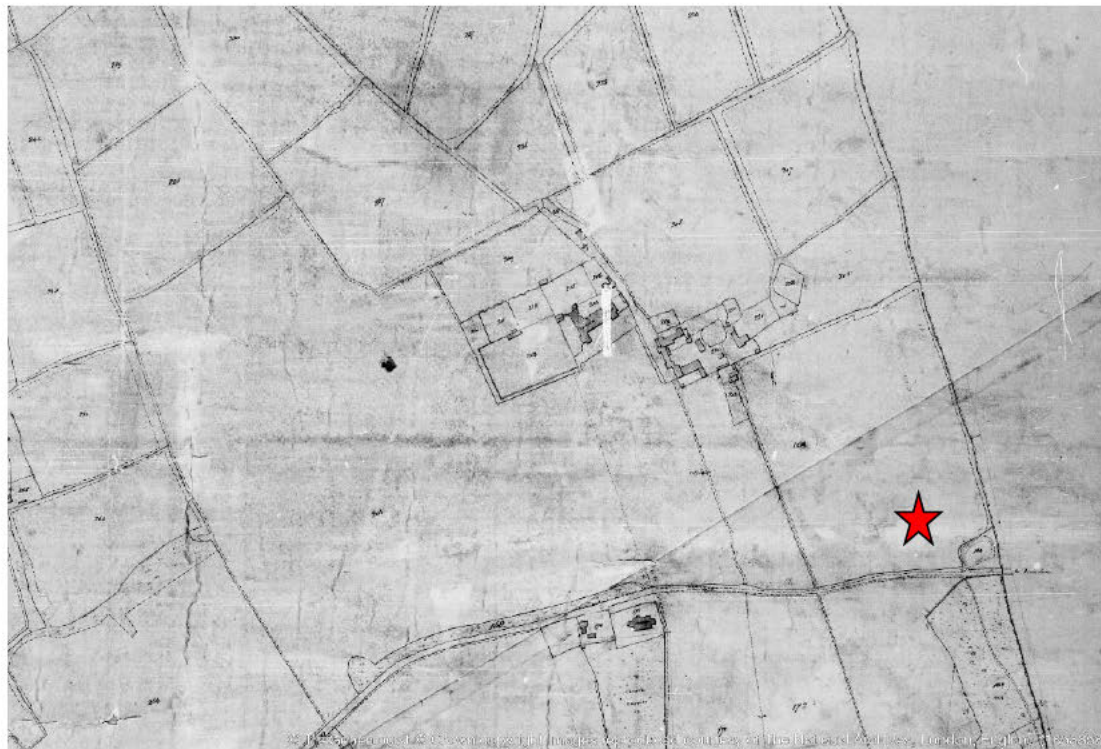


Fig.1: West Horsley tithe map, 1839 (red star indicates the rough location of the site)

- 2.11 On Charles Weston's death in 1849, the estate was inherited by his half-brother, Colonel John Henry Weston. He died a year later and was succeeded by his son, Henry, who was living in Middlesex. During this period, West Horsley Place continued to be let to Henry Currie. In 1863, Henry MacGregor Weston inherited the estate, but did not reside there until 1908 when its tenancy by Currie came to an end.
- 2.12 The 1873 OS map (**Fig.2**) depicts the field containing the site lying outside the parkland associated with West Horsley Place and part of the agricultural land within the estate that was farmed from Place Farm. The 1896 OS map (**Fig.3**) gives a more detailed picture of the land uses and planting, both maps showing trees lining the principal drive up to West Horsley Place and the later map

showing an 'L'-shaped band of tree planting crossing the parkland area west of the drive (and south of the main front of the house).



Fig.2: 1873 OS map (surveyed in 1870). Red arrow marks rough location of the site. The shaded area to the west is presumed to denote the parkland associated with West Horsley Place, with the remainder of the estate (including the application site) comprising agricultural land (the much larger shaded area to the east was parkland associated with East Horsley Towers)

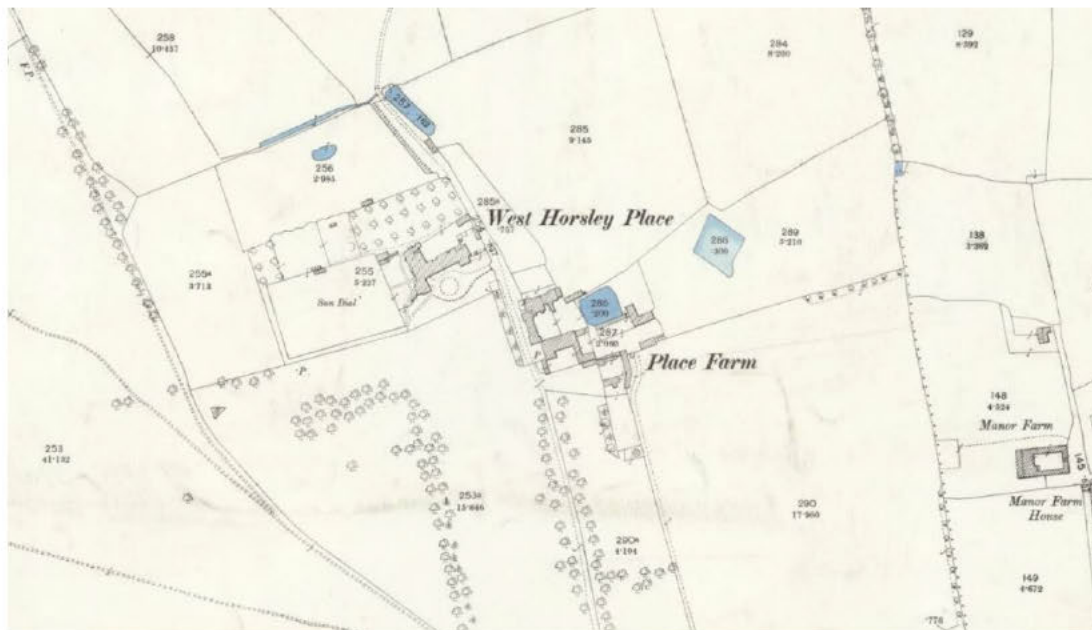


Fig.3: 1896 OS map

- 2.13 In 1908, West Horsley Place became free and Henry MacGregor Weston moved into it. The 1914 OS map (**Fig.4**) shows the thinning out of some of the tree planting but no change to the field containing the application site. In 1917, the altered tithe apportionment records this field as being in the ownership and occupation of the Trustees of West Horsley Estate and still in arable cultivation.



Fig.4: 1914 OS map

- 2.14 When Henry MacGregor Weston died in 1919, his nephew, Major Charles Francis Weston, inherited the property. However, in 1921, the rising costs of maintaining a landed estate forced him to sell the property, a situation that was common across the country during the years between the two World Wars. The estate was bought by Lady Cooper who had it for ten years before it was acquired in 1931 by the Marquess and Marchioness of Crewe, who used it as their country home.

2.15 The 1935 OS map (revised in 1934; **Fig.5**) reveals that by this date the land in the south-eastern corner of the field had been sold off and divided into three building plots of very substantial proportions. The western plot, representing the application site, had been built on with a house towards the Epsom Road frontage. The easternmost plot had also been built on with a house having a much larger set-back from the road, dictated by the continuing presence of the old chalk pit in the south-eastern corner of the plot.

2.16 Indeed, the presence of this feature meant that access to this house (Glenview) could only be achieved via a driveway into the central plot, which ran around the edge of the chalk pit, the two plots having presumably been acquired together with the aim of amalgamating them into one much larger plot.

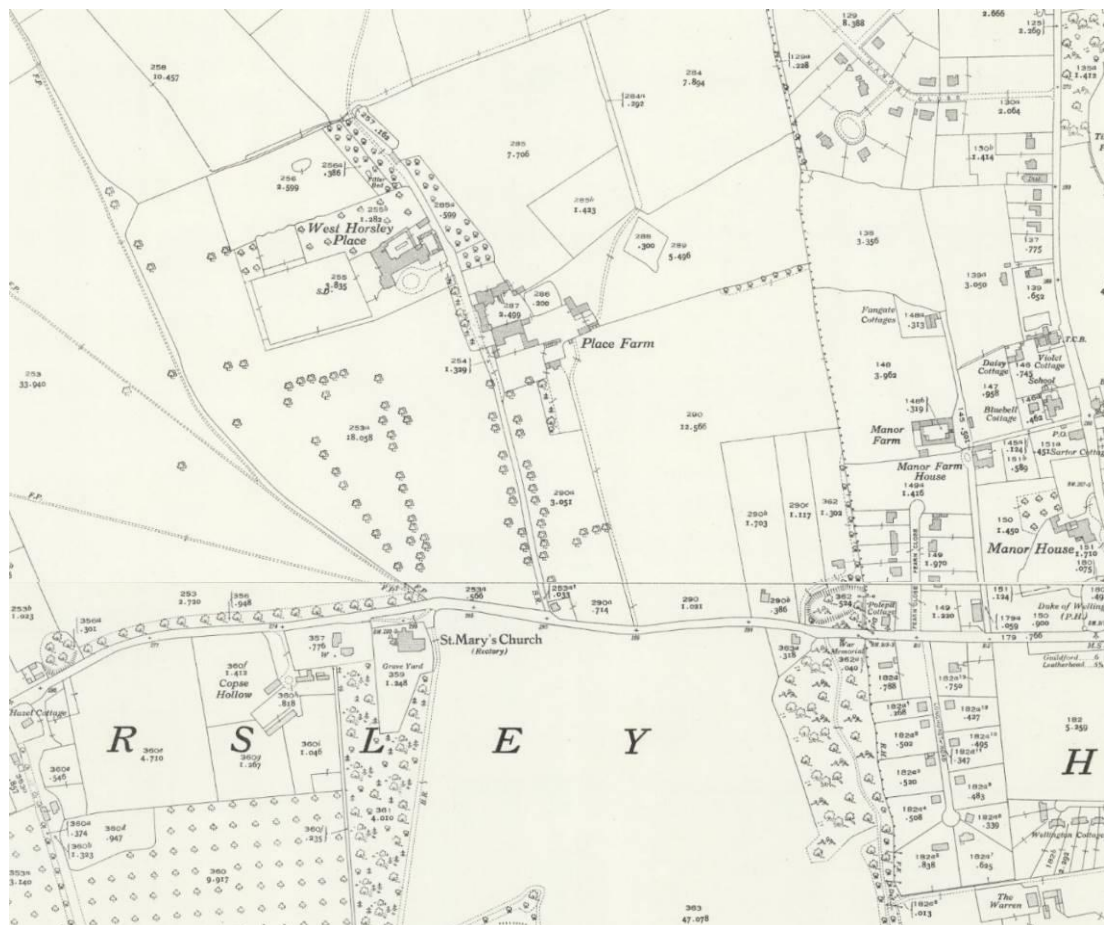


Fig.5: 1935 OS map

2.17 This map also shows new residential cul de sac developments (Fearne Close and Longhurst Road) north and south of Epsom Road just to the east of the site, and the residential development of land to the north-east, north of the parkland

associated with East Horsley Towers (including some encroachment into the latter), all within the East Horsley parish boundary.

2.18 The 1939 Register (taken for the purpose of issuing identity cards and ration books, and sometimes called the Wartime Domesday Book) records the house on the application site as Rentorre, occupied by William Goodchild, a retired manufacturer, and the Toons, a married couple in their late forties and their two daughters. The neighbouring property, Glenview, was occupied by the Young family. The planning history available on the Council's website suggests that the house known as Rentorre was demolished and replaced with the present house, Sheepleas, in c.2002, which appears to be more deeply set back into the plot than Rentorre was.

2.19 By 1961 (**Fig.6**), development of the East Horsley Towers parkland was underway.



Fig.6: 1961 OS map

2.20 Mary Crewe-Milnes, the daughter of Lord and Lady Crewe and Duchess of Roxburghe, inherited West Horsley Place in 1967, the same year that the

building was added to the statutory list at Grade I, and spent her summers there until her death in 2014 at the age of 99, when the estate was left to her great-nephew, Bamber Gascoigne and his wife, Christina. The Gascoignes established a charity, now known as the West Horsley Place Trust, with the aim of restoring the house and associated buildings and providing facilities for encouragement of the performing arts and the teaching of various crafts. West Horsley Place is also now the home of Grange Park Opera, a summer opera festival, a charity which has constructed a new opera house behind the house.

- 2.21 While West Horsley Place has been added to Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register, urgent structural remediation work has been carried out, and there is a phased programme of repair in progress.

3.0 THE SITE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO HERITAGE ASSETS

3.1 Site description

- 3.1.1 The site (**Plates 1-7**) comprises an extensive garden of long rectangular plan. Sheepleas, a large detached two-storey house built in c.2002 (and, for the avoidance of doubt, of no heritage interest) stands towards the southern end of the plot behind a garden, vehicle drive and turning circle. It is faced with a mix of red brick and flint and has hipped clay tile-covered roofs. A single-storey pitched-roof triple garage and home office building erected in c.2004 stands on the west side of the turning circle and there is a substantial outbuilding housing an indoor swimming pool/gym and ancillary accommodation east of the house, built in c.2008-09.
- 3.1.2 It should be noted that the existing house is outside the red-line site area, with the application site comprising part of its rear garden.
- 3.1.3 Behind the house is a very large level lawn with raised grass strip (possibly formed from the spoil created from the levelling of the lawn) planted with young silver birch trees along its western edge between the lawn and the site boundary. This latter comprises a wire-mesh fence lined with deciduous trees (including mature trees), on both sides. East of the lawn is further raised ground and tree planting and a glasshouse. The eastern boundary against Glenview's land also comprises a wire-mesh fence and belt of trees. At the northern end of the garden is a tennis court surrounded by wire-mesh fencing. Beyond this, the northern boundary of the site is lined with mature deciduous trees.
- 3.1.4 The site has no intrinsic heritage significance. Its character is that of a large and well-maintained suburban garden, well-screened on all sides by mature trees.

3.2 Heritage assets

Scope of assessment

- 3.2.1 The north-west corner of the site lies c.330m south-east of the Grade I listed West Horsley Place on land that was once part of an agricultural field within the compass of the West Horsley Place estate (the estate itself has no heritage

designation). The south-eastern corner of this field had been sold off out of the estate for development and built on with two detached houses in large gardens by 1934 (it is not clear under whose aegis this sale was made, either that of Major Charles Francis Weston in c.1921 (sale particulars dating to 1921 and 1923 exist for the sale of various portions of the estate, including building land); Lady Cooper between 1921 and 1931; or Lord and Lady Crewe after 1931).

- 3.2.2 There are several separately Grade II listed structures associated with the house, including two mid-19th-century dog kennels directly in front of its front elevation; early 18th-century brick walls enclosing a garden west of the house; and early 18th-century gate and piers immediately west of the house. Because of the locations and ancillary nature of these structures, which form part of the immediate setting of the Grade I listed house, they are not considered to have any potential to be affected by the development of the application site and are not considered in any further detail as part of this assessment.
- 3.2.3 South-east of West Horsley Place is a group of Grade II listed buildings, including the Stable Block, which fronts onto the main carriage drive up to the house; two barns; and Place Farm Cottages (the former farmhouse). These buildings are grouped around the rectangular former Place Farm farmyard, which is now used as a visitors' car park.
- 3.2.4 About 120m to the south-east of the application site, on the north side of Epsom Road, is the Grade II listed Polepit Cottage. About 180m to the south-west, also on the north side of Epsom Road, is the Grade II listed Lodge and Gates to West Horsley Place.

West Horsley Place and Place Farm

- 3.2.5 There are two long, parallel, linear driveways from Epsom Road up into the estate. The western of these runs up to the listed stable block and serves West Horsley Place, while the eastern one runs up to the former Place Farm, and is signposted 'Deliveries and large vehicles only'. Visitors to West Horsley Place, the Grange Park Opera, and to the café and other activities in the converted buildings at Place Farm use the western driveway, which connects to the eastern driveway and car park via a link. On the 1873 OS map, the eastern driveway

represents the eastern boundary of the parkland against the estate farmland to the east.

- 3.2.6 The west side of the eastern driveway up to Place Farm is lined with trees and scrub growth, dividing it from the parkland to the west (the trees are not indicated on the 1873 or 1896 OS maps in this location). The east side has a grass verge and post-and-wire fence against the pasture field to the east. The field is overlooked at the northern end by a brick detached house of the mid-late 20th century that presumably replaced the original Place farmhouse. This is the only building that is readily seen from Epsom Road in views which also take in the application site (**Plates 8 & 9**).
- 3.2.7 There are views eastwards across the field east of the driveway towards the application site. In the winter months, Sheepleas and its associated structures are visible in these views, albeit heavily filtered by the tree belt along the site's western boundary (**Plates 10-13**). Beyond the northern end of the application site, there are also tree-filtered glimpses through to late 20th-century residential development on Holmwood Close around the East Horsley Bowling Club green (**Plate 14**).
- 3.2.8 While I have not visited the site in the summer months, Google Streetview imagery from June 2023 (**Plates 15 & 16**) provides an indication of the high density of the tree belt along the boundary of the application site when the trees are in leaf.
- 3.2.9 In all these views, the tree belt around the application site's western and northern boundaries clearly marks the distinction between the agricultural land still part of the West Horsley Place estate and the residential development associated with East Horsley.
- 3.2.10 The driveway opens onto what is now a car park, but which was historically the 'secondary' element of the Place Farm farmyard to the east, divided from the principal farmyard to the west by a wall and a large pond. The principal farmyard is currently laid to grass and enclosed on the west by the rear elevation of the Grade II listed early 18th-century stable block; on the north by the rear of the Grade II listed 17th-century Place Farm Cottages (the former

farmhouse); and on the south by a Grade II listed 18th-century five-bay former threshing barn, now converted to a café/venue. A courtyard enclosed by lower-height ranges and a wall extends south of the barn. These buildings are all constructed of red brick (with some weatherboarding to the barn) and have plain clay tile-covered hipped roofs (**Plates 17-21**).

3.2.11 The area east of this (all historic farmyard divisions have been lost) has been converted to a hard-surfaced car park and, as a result, and because of the more dispersed nature of the buildings around it, has less integrity. It includes a Grade II listed 17th-century weatherboarded three-bay former threshing barn and a number of smaller unlisted structures, including a weatherboarded granary on staddle-stones and a cart-shed (**Plates 19-20 & 22-25**).

3.2.12 As a group, and despite the car park use and conversion of some of the buildings to other uses, the buildings retain a degree of integrity and legibility relating to their historical use. The key element of the setting of the group is their relationship to West Horsley Place itself because it is this relationship that underpins their legibility as the former estate farm. The stable block has a particularly close relationship with the house because of its position fronting west onto the main carriage drive, from where the two can be viewed in conjunction (**Plates 26 & 27**).

3.2.13 The group of farm buildings is relatively discrete and well enclosed and has no direct relationship with the application site (which lies some 160m to the south-east at its closest point), either visual or functional (see **Plates 22 & 23** for example). While the application site was formerly part of land farmed from Place Farm, it had been sold off for development by the early 1930s, and cannot be considered to form a meaningful element of the setting of the listed farm buildings. It is divided from the group by the large pasture field of which it once formed a part, the field continuing to provide a substantial buffer between the West Horsley Place parkland and farm buildings and the residential development of East Horsley to the east (to which the application site is now more closely related) (**Plate 28**).

3.2.14 The Grade I listed West Horsley Place itself stands north-west of the Place Farm buildings. The house faces south across a swathe of parkland extending south to

Epsom Road, bounded on its eastern side by the main carriage drive (**Plates 26 & 29-30**). A belt of mature trees (depicted on the 1896 OS map) provides a screen between the stable block and peripheral views east from the house (**Plates 30 & 31**). South of this the carriage drive is lined with parkland-style railings and a tree avenue, including younger trees that have presumably replaced mature trees that have been lost.

3.2.15 In winter, longer views are afforded from the carriage drive north-west towards the façade of the house, filtered by the trees along the western side of the driveway (**Plates 26 & 32-33**). It is assumed that most, if not all, of these views are lost in the summer months when the trees are in leaf. However, the increased visibility in the winter views is important to establishing the parkland context of the house and its relationship to Place Farm and the stable block, the cupola of which is a prominent feature of the view.

3.2.16 In winter views east from the southern part of the main carriage drive, there are glimpses across the land between the two driveways through to the pasture field between the eastern driveway and the application site (**Plates 34-37**). These views are heavily filtered by the trees along the western edge of the eastern driveway and will be substantially reduced (if not entirely lost) in the summer months. The visibility of the application site in these views is largely confined to the tree belt that forms its western boundary beyond the pasture field.

3.2.17 The application site is, however, not part of any key view. The key views are taken looking north from the southern end of the driveway, from where one's view is channelled up its long linear course towards the house and farm buildings. In the summer months, this view will be enclosed by trees and the experience will change, from the more open character of the winter view that allows glimpses of the house, to a slower revealing of the house; the presence of built form will first be revealed by the stable block (likely to retain some visibility in summer because of the slight curve in the driveway at its northern end) before oblique views of the façade of the house become available.

3.2.18 There are no views towards the application site from West Horsley Place itself. The buildings of Place Farm and several tree screens intervene. The house is oriented slightly to the south-east rather than facing directly south over its

parkland. However, it still benefits from views southwards over this land, including a tree-filtered view (in winter) of the Grade I listed Church of St Mary the Virgin on Epsom Road, including the broach spire on its 12th-century tower (**Plate 38**). In turn, there are glimpsed views towards the façade of the house through the tree belt along Epsom Road, which reveal the house in its parkland context (**Plate 39**).

- 3.2.19 The trees along the main carriage drive frame the eastern side of the view south from the house over the parkland (see **Plate 38**). The late 19th-century OS mapping (**Figs.2 & 3**) reveals that the western edge of this view was also historically framed by a linear belt of trees lining both sides of a footpath from the house to Epsom Road; while some of these trees have survived, many have been lost and there are now more open views available across the parkland to the west (**Plate 40**). Similar views can presumably be enjoyed from the first-floor windows of the west front of the house, beyond the walled garden. As the 1873 OS map at **Fig.2** shows, the majority of the parkland landscape lay west and south of the house which, surrounded by a rectangular area of compartmented gardens (including the large walled garden), was situated in its north-eastern corner.
- 3.2.20 Views from the public footpath running northwest-southeast to the west of the house also now take in views of the Grange Park Opera building constructed behind it (**Plates 41 & 42**). This is a large building that has significantly altered the setting of the building beyond its gardens to the north and which is rather more visible in winter than it will be in the summer months.
- 3.2.21 From further south along the same footpath views east are taken across the parkland south and south-west of the house. The belt of trees along the western boundary of the application site is not discernible from the other tree belts that cut across this view, simply forming part of the backdrop to a generally well-treed landscape (**Plates 43-45**).
- 3.2.22 In summary, the application site does not make any contribution to the significance of West Horsley Place or the ability to appreciate its setting. Although it lies within the wider physical setting of the listed building, and once formed an outer part of its estate against the parish boundary with East Horsley,

this was agricultural land rather than designed parkland, and has been detached from the estate since c.1930, since when it has, like its neighbouring plot, been developed with a house and garden.

3.2.23 The application site is well screened by trees, including in winter, and 'reads' as part of the residential development which it adjoins in East Horsley rather than as a part of the West Horsley Place estate. There is no inter-visibility between West Horsley Place and the site, and the two are not experienced in conjunction with each other. The site does not form a part of the experience and appreciation of West Horsley Place.

3.2.24 Similarly, the site is well screened from the listed buildings at Place Farm and no longer has any relationship with these buildings – as noted, the land was sold off from the estate's agricultural land in c.1930 and the farm buildings themselves have since, in part, been converted to other uses. There is no meaningful inter-visibility between them and the site does not contribute to their significance – it no longer comprises agricultural land, but has the character of a large suburban garden. The tree belts along its western and northern boundaries are important in their demarcation of the distinction in land uses and ownership.

Lodge and Gates to West Horsley Place

3.2.25 The entrance lodge and gates are situated at the foot of the main entrance drive to West Horsley Place, with a relatively deep set-back from Epsom Road. The lodge dates to the mid-17th century, extended to the rear in the 20th century, and is of a single storey, constructed of red and brown brick. Curved quadrant railings attached to the building end in sandstone piers with ball finials, which flank the ironwork gates; these have scroll foliage arched work to the central overthrow (**Plates 46 & 47**).

3.2.26 The lodge and gates have no relationship or intervisibility with the application site. Their setting is very specifically defined by their relationship with the entrance drive to West Horsley Place.

Polepit Cottage

- 3.2.27 This Grade II listed cottage was built in 1863 in 'Lovelace' style (William King, Earl of Lovelace, owned the adjoining estate in East Horsley). It is distinctive for its flint rubble construction with brick dressings.
- 3.2.28 The building stands gable end-on to Epsom Road, with its front elevation facing east towards East rather than West Horsley, and its plot is well enclosed by high fencing, trees and other vegetation such that it is well-concealed from the road; this well-vegetated garden forms the building's key setting. Land to the north was developed with housing (on Fearne Close) by c.1930.
- 3.2.29 The building is separated from the application site by the substantial and well-vegetated plot to Glenview and has no relationship with it.

4.0 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 The proposals are for the construction of five new detached dwellings (1 x 5 bed, 2 x 4 bed, and 2 x 3 bed) in the very substantial rear garden to Sheepleas. Sheepleas itself will be retained, along with its generous front garden area and a truncated rear garden, extending northwards the length of the existing swimming-pool building.
- 4.2 Four of the new dwellings will be arranged in a generally linear manner in the eastern half of the site (with gardens extending back to the eastern boundary), with the fifth dwelling situated towards the north-western corner of the site and facing down the access drive, which will run through the western half of the site. The access into the site will be via the existing access to Sheepleas. All the existing boundary trees around the site will be retained.
- 4.3 Plots 1 and 2 will be of similar design, each of 2 storeys with a pitched roof and symmetrically-arranged façade with central projecting gable over an open-sided entrance porch. Materials will be red brick and tile, characteristic of Sheepleas and the locality generally.
- 4.4 Plots 3 and 4 will be of different design, and of similar height, using a similar palette of brick and tile (including tile hanging) with half-hipped roof, gabled dormers and central entrance with open-sided canopy. Plot 5 will be of slightly lower height (125mm lower than Plots 1 and 2), and again of 2 storeys, of brick and tile, half-hipped roof, central gable with hipped dormers and an external stack.
- 4.5 The proposed dwellings are all designed in a traditional style using the local materials palette and forms, and will be compatible with the design and materials of Sheepleas.
- 4.6 The proposals will have no intrinsically harmful impact on the application site itself, which has no heritage designations. As discussed above, while the site once formed part of farmland on the West Horsley Place estate, it was part of land sold off for development almost 100 years ago and retains no agricultural character, having been built on with the predecessor house to Sheepleas in c.1930 and otherwise laid out as a very substantial garden (with tennis court).

Its redevelopment with a larger house, swimming-pool building and garage has taken place in the last 20 years or so.

- 4.7 The principal 'heritage issue' which requires consideration is whether the proposals will have any impact on the significance of the group of listed buildings including West Horsley Place and Place Farm arising from development within their wider physical setting. I do not identify any potential for impact on the listed lodge and gates or on Polepit Cottage because of their closely-defined settings and lack of any relationship with the site.
- 4.8 As discussed above, the application site does not form an important element of the setting of any of the West Horsley Place buildings, with which it has no intervisibility and no longer has any functional relationship. The application site can be seen from within the estate that forms the meaningful wider setting of these buildings, most evidently from the eastern drive to Place Farm, but from here it is viewed as a separate entity, outside the estate, and as part of development on the western edge of East Horsley. This well-established context is one in which belts of trees along the estate's boundaries clearly divide open land within the estate from developed land outside it.
- 4.9 The mature tree belts along the western and northern boundaries of the application site are an important contributor to this perception, serving as a clear marker of the distinction in ownership and land use. These are, importantly, to be retained as part of the development and will continue to provide the screening from which Sheepleas and its garden currently benefit, providing a heavy filter to views into the application site from the estate, even in the winter months.
- 4.10 It is apparent that there will be similar filtered (winter-only) glimpses of the proposed houses through the tree screen from the eastern driveway to Place Farm as currently exist to Sheepleas and its associated swimming-pool building, and houses beyond in East Horsley. The June 2023 Google Streetview imagery included at **Plates 15 & 16** indicates there is unlikely to be any visibility of the new dwellings during the summer months when the trees are in leaf.
- 4.11 The acceptability of the proposed development in heritage terms is not, however, predicated on there being no glimpsed views of it at all through the

tree screening. First, the existing and long-established context is one in which it is clear that there is built form beyond the tree belt (in the same way in which built form runs up to the tree belt bordering the estate further north along its eastern boundary). Second, the proposed new dwellings are designed to be compatible with local forms and materials. Third, as only a marginal (and very much altered in terms of character) component of the wider physical setting of the listed buildings (and not one from which the latter are experienced), the site has no significant or otherwise meaningful relationship with these heritage assets.

- 4.12 For all these reasons it is my firmly held view that the likely glimpsed visibility of the development in winter from the eastern drive will not have any harmful impact on the significance of any of the listed buildings, or on the ability to appreciate their significance.
- 4.13 The proposals therefore meet the statutory test set out in Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and accord with local and national policy relating to the historic environment.

5.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

- 5.1 This report has assessed the contribution made by the application site at Epsom Road in West Horsley to the significance and settings of the nearby listed buildings at West Horsley Place, Place Farm and Polepit Cottage. Based on this assessment, the report has then considered the potential impact the proposed residential development of the site with five new dwellings may have upon these heritage assets.
- 5.2 The assessment has concluded that the site makes no contribution to the significance of any of the listed buildings or to the ability to appreciate their significance. While the site once formed part of the West Horsley Place estate's agricultural land adjoining the parkland, it was sold off in c.1930 along with an adjoining plot, both being developed at that time with single detached houses in very large gardens. The site is now separated from the estate by a belt of trees that clearly demarcates the change in land use and ownership, and the existing house on the site 'reads' as part of general residential development on the western edge of East Horsley.
- 5.3 The proposed dwellings have been designed in a manner which respects the established form of development on the site (the relatively recent detached house known as Sheepleas) as well as using architectural forms and materials that are characteristic more generally of the local built environment. Importantly, the proposals will retain all the trees along the western and northern boundaries of the site so that the existing demarcation of the boundary between the estate and later residential development, and the screening effect the trees provide (through which only glimpsed views of residential development are available), will be preserved.
- 4.14 In conclusion, it is my view that the proposed development, and the likely glimpsed visibility of it in winter from within the estate (from the eastern driveway to Place Farm) will not have any harmful impact on the significance of any of the listed buildings, or on the ability to appreciate their significance. As such, the proposals are in accordance with the NPPF and local policy on the historic built environment, and with the statutory requirement of Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.



Plate 1: Looking north across the front garden towards Sheepleas



Plate 2: Looking north across the application site, with western boundary to left



Plate 3: Looking north across the application site, with western boundary to left



Plate 4: Looking north-east across the application site



Plate 5: Looking east/south-east across the application site



Plate 6: Western boundary of application site



Plate 7: Looking south across application site towards rear of Sheepleas, with swimming-pool building to left



Plate 8: Looking north along eastern driveway to Place Farm from Epsom Road



Plate 9: Looking north along eastern driveway to Place Farm from Epsom Road



Plate 10: Looking east/south-east from Place Farm driveway towards application site's tree-lined western boundary (Sheepleas can be glimpsed beyond)



Plate 11: Looking east/north-east from Place Farm driveway towards application site's tree-lined western boundary



Plate 12: Looking east/south-east from Place Farm driveway towards application site's tree-lined western boundary



Plate 13: Looking east/south-east from Place Farm driveway towards application site's tree-lined western boundary



Plate 14: Looking east from Place Farm driveway towards application site's western boundary (in the centre, houses beyond in East Horsley can be glimpsed)



Plate 15: Looking north-east from Epsom Road towards application site's western boundary (Google Streetview, June 2023)



Plate 16: Looking north-east from Epsom Road (by entrance to Place Farm driveway) towards application site's western boundary (Google Streetview, June 2023)



Plate 17: Looking north from top of Place Farm driveway into the eastern former farmyard area (unlisted granary in centre and listed barn to right)



Plate 18: Looking west across former farmyard towards listed Place Farm buildings



Plate 19: Looking west across former farmyard towards listed Place Farm buildings



Plate 20: Looking north-west across former farmyard towards listed Place Farm buildings



Plate 21: Southern elevation of listed five-bay former threshing barn, now converted to other uses



Plate 22: Looking south across former farmyard towards the granary at the end of the Place Farm driveway



Plate 23: Looking south towards the granary at the end of the Place Farm driveway



Plate 24: Unlisted former cart-shed at Place Farm



Plate 25: Looking east across former farmyard to listed three-bay former threshing barn



Plate 26: Key view north along main carriage drive to Grade I listed West Horsley Place and its Grade II listed stable block



Plate 27: Looking south along main carriage drive to West Horsley Place, with listed stable block to left



Plate 28: View north from Epsom Road across field within the West Horsley Place estate, with trees lining Place Farm driveway to left and boundary of application site to right



Plate 29: West Horsley Place and its fine 17th-century façade



Plate 30: Looking north-west from edge of carriage drive across parkland towards West Horsley Place



Plate 31: Looking north from edge of carriage drive, showing tree screening between West Horsley Place and its stable block



Plate 32: Key winter view north along carriage drive to West Horsley Place towards the house and stable block



Plate 33: Key view north along carriage drive to West Horsley Place towards the house and stable block



Plate 34: Looking east towards the application site (the two taller conifers mark its western boundary) from the southern end of the carriage drive to West Horsley Place



Plate 35: Looking east towards the application site from the carriage drive to West Horsley Place



Plate 36: Looking east/north-east towards the application site from the carriage drive to West Horsley Place (red arrow roughly marks the north-west corner of the site)



Plate 37: Looking east towards the application site (the two taller conifers mark its western boundary) from the carriage drive to West Horsley Place



Plate 38: Looking south across the parkland in front of West Horsley Place towards Epsom Road and the Grade I listed Church of St Mary the Virgin



Plate 39: Looking north through the trees along Epsom Road towards West Horsley Place



Plate 40: Looking west across parkland lying south of West Horsley Place



Plate 41: Looking east towards West Horsley Place and the Grange Park Opera (roofline to west among trees) from public footpath



Plate 42: Looking east towards West Horsley Place and the Grange Park Opera (roofline to west among trees) from public footpath



Plate 43: Looking south-east in the direction of the application site across parkland south-west of West Horsley Place, from public footpath



Plate 44: Looking east in the direction of the application site across parkland south-west of West Horsley Place, from public footpath



Plate 45: Looking east in the direction of the application site across parkland south-west of West Horsley Place, from public footpath



Plate 46: Grade II listed entrance lodge to West Horsley Place



Plate 47: Grade II listed gates by lodge to West Horsley Place