

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Land South of Barrow Green Road, Oxted

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REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This Heritage Impact Assessment considers the impacts to relevant built heritage assets arising from the proposed development of Land South of Barrow Green Road, Oxted.
2. The proposed development, which comprises an outline application for the development of up to 190 dwellings, an extra care facility and associated access and infrastructure, has the potential to affect the setting, and therefore significance, of the following heritage assets:
 - Church of St Mary the Virgin, Grade I listed (NHLE 1189608), located approximately 80m east of the Site
 - Court Farm House, Grade II listed building (NHLE 1029739), located approximately 100m south-east of the Site
 - Blunt House, Grade II listed building (NHLE 1377646), located approximately 195m west of the Site, in an elevated position
3. In accordance with paragraph 207 of the NPPF and Historic England guidance provided in *GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets*, this report describes the significance of these heritage assets and assesses the contribution that their settings make to that significance. It also provides an assessment of the impact that the proposed development will have on the significance of the heritage assets.
4. This demonstrates that the Site presently makes a limited contribution to the significance of the Church of St Mary the Virgin, as a remnant of its historic, rural setting. It also permits some public and private views of the listed building. This assessment, together with the visualisations provided as part of this application, demonstrates that the development will alter this element of the listed building's setting. This will include changes to the approach to the listed building from the north-west. These works will give rise to a limited level of less than substantial harm.
5. The Site makes no contribution to the significance of Court Farm House, or Blunt House and the development will have no impact on their significance.
6. This report meets the requirements of paragraph 207 of the NPPF and provides sufficient information to determine this planning application. The planning balance required by paragraph 215 of the NPPF is provided in the separate Planning Statement.

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Heritage Impact Assessment has been researched and prepared by RPS, on behalf of Croudace Homes and considers the heritage impacts arising from the proposed development of Land South of Barrow Green Road, Oxted. It is referred to as “the Site” throughout this report.
- 1.2 This document is prepared for submission as part of an outline planning application, comprising:
- Outline application for a residential development of up to 190 dwellings comprising of 44% affordable homes (Use Class C3), and an extra care facility with up to up 80 beds (Use Class C2), including the formation of vehicular access, landscaping, parking, open space, green and blue infrastructure, and all other associated development works. All matters reserved except access.***
- 1.3 Production of this report follows earlier assessment work and pre-application engagement with Historic England, Tandridge District Council and Surrey County Council. This pre-application engagement has enabled the relevant heritage assets to be identified and assessed, with design measures also developed to ensure that the proposals respond to the setting and significance of the relevant heritage assets.
- 1.4 The Site lies within the setting of the Grade I listed Church of St Mary. In accordance with paragraph 207 of the NPPF and Historic England guidance provided in *GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets*, this report has been prepared to describe the significance of this heritage asset, assess the contribution that its setting, including the Site, makes to this significance, and finally to assess the impacts to this significance arising from the development proposals. This enables Tandridge District Council, as the decision maker, to reach an informed decision regarding the heritage impacts of the application.
- 1.5 This report also provides an assessment of the Grade II listed Court Farm House and the Grade II listed Blunt House. Both buildings lie close to the Site and have been identified through the scoping process.
- 1.6 This report refers to the relevant legislation contained within the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and both national and local planning policy. In addition, relevant Historic England guidance notably has been consulted to inform the judgements made. Relevant information, including the listing citations for the relevant heritage assets and the Surrey Historic Environment Record have also been consulted in preparing this Heritage Impact Assessment. This report has been informed by site visits of the Site and local area undertaken in both summer and winter months. This report should be read alongside the Photomontages prepared by Snapshot Visuals and submitted as part of this application.
- 1.7 The findings of this report are based on the known conditions at the time of writing and all findings and conclusions are time limited to no more than 3 years from the date of this report. All maps, plans and photographs are for illustrative purposes only.

2 LEGISLATIVE AND PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 The current national legislative and planning policy system identifies, through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), that applicants should consider the potential impact of development upon 'heritage assets'. This term includes: designated heritage assets which possess a statutory designation (for example listed buildings and conservation areas); and non-designated heritage assets, typically identified by Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) and incorporated into a Local List and/or recorded on the Historic Environment Record.

Legislation

- 2.2 Where any development may affect certain designated heritage assets, there is a legislative framework to ensure proposed works are developed and considered with due regard to their impact on designated heritage assets. This extends from primary legislation under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 2.3 The relevant legislation in this case extends from section 66 of the 1990 Act which states that special regard must be given by the decision maker, in the exercise of planning functions, to the desirability of preserving or enhancing listed buildings and their setting.
- 2.4 The meaning and effect of these duties have been considered by the courts, including the Court of Appeal's decision in relation to Barnwell Manor Wind Energy Ltd v East Northamptonshire District Council [2014] EWCA Civ 137.
- 2.5 The Court agreed within the High Court's judgement that Parliament's intention in enacting section 66(1) was that decision makers should give '*considerable importance and weight*' to the desirability of preserving (i.e. keeping from harm) the setting of listed buildings.

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, December 2023)

- 2.6 The NPPF is the principal document that sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
- 2.7 It defines a heritage asset as a: '*building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest*'. This includes both designated and non-designated heritage assets.
- 2.8 Section 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment relates to the conservation of heritage assets in the production of local plans and decision taking. It emphasises that heritage assets are '*an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance*'.
- 2.9 For proposals that have the potential to affect the significance of a heritage asset, paragraph 207 requires applicants to identify and describe the significance of any heritage assets that may be affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail provided should be proportionate to the significance of the heritage assets affected. This is supported by paragraph 208, which requires LPAs to take this assessment into account when considering applications.
- 2.10 Under '*Considering potential impacts*' paragraph 212 states that '*great weight*' should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, irrespective of whether any potential impact equates to total loss, substantial harm or less than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage assets.
- 2.11 Paragraph 214 states that where a development will result in substantial harm to, or total loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset, permission should be refused, unless this harm is

necessary to achieve substantial public benefits, or a number of criteria are met. Where less than substantial harm is identified paragraph 215 requires this harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposed development.

National Guidance

Planning Practice Guidance (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government)

- 2.12 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) has been adopted to aid the application of the NPPF. It reiterates that conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance is a core planning principle.
- 2.13 The PPG defines the different heritage interests as follows:
- archaeological interest: As defined in the Glossary to the National Planning Policy Framework, there will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.
 - architectural and artistic interest: These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skill, like sculpture.
 - historic interest: An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history, but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.
- 2.14 Key elements of the guidance relate to assessing harm. It states that substantial harm is a high bar that may not arise in many cases. It also states that while the level of harm will be at the discretion of the decision maker, generally substantial harm is a high test that will only arise where a development seriously affects a key element of an asset's special interest. It is the degree of harm, rather than the scale of development, that is to be assessed.

GPA2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (March 2015)

- 2.15 This document provides advice on numerous ways in which decision making in the historic environment could be undertaken, emphasising that the first step for all applicants is to understand the significance of any affected heritage asset and the contribution of its setting to that significance. In line with the NPPF and PPG, the document states that early engagement and expert advice in considering and assessing the significance of heritage assets is encouraged. The advice suggests a structured, staged approach to the assembly and analysis of relevant information:
1. Understand the significance of the affected assets;
 2. Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance;
 3. Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF;
 4. Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance;
 5. Justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance balanced with the need for change; and

6. Offset negative impacts to significance by enhancing others through recording, disseminating and archiving archaeological and historical interest of the important elements of the heritage assets affected.

GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Second Edition; December 2017)

- 2.16 This advice note focuses on the management of change within the setting of heritage assets. This document replaces GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (March 2017) and Seeing History in the View (English Heritage, 2011) in order to aid practitioners with the implementation of national legislation, policies and guidance relating to the setting of heritage assets found in the 1990 Act, the NPPF and PPG. The guidance is largely a continuation of the philosophy and approach of the 2011 and 2015 documents and does not present a divergence in either the definition of setting or the way in which it should be assessed.
- 2.17 As with the NPPF the document defines setting as *'the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve'*. Setting is also described as being a separate term to curtilage, character and context. The guidance emphasises that setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, and that its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset, or the ability to appreciate that significance. It also states that elements of setting may make a positive, negative or neutral contribution to the significance of the heritage asset.
- 2.18 While setting is largely a visual term, with views considered to be an important consideration in any assessment of the contribution that setting makes to the significance of an asset, and thus the way in which an asset is experienced, setting also encompasses other environmental factors including noise, vibration and odour. Historical and cultural associations may also form part of the asset's setting, which can inform or enhance the significance of a heritage asset.
- 2.19 This document provides guidance on practical and proportionate decision making with regards to the management of change within the setting of heritage assets. It is stated that the protection of the setting of a heritage asset need not prevent change and that decisions relating to such issues need to be based on the nature, extent and level of the significance of a heritage asset, further weighing up the potential public benefits associated with the proposals. It is further stated that changes within the setting of a heritage asset may have positive or neutral effects.
- 2.20 The document also states that the contribution made to the significance of heritage assets by their settings will vary depending on the nature of the heritage asset and its setting, and that different heritage assets may have different abilities to accommodate change without harming their significance. Setting should, therefore, be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- 2.21 Historic England recommends using a series of detailed steps in order to assess the potential effects of a proposed development on significance of a heritage asset. The 5-step process is as follows:
1. Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected;
 2. Assess the degree to which these settings and views make a contribution to the significance of a heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated;
 3. Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on the significance or on the ability to appreciate it;
 4. Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm; and
 5. Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.

HEAN12: Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets (October 2019)

- 2.22 This advice note provides information on how to assess the significance of a heritage asset. It also explores how this should be used as part of a staged approach to decision-making in which assessing significance precedes designing the proposal(s).
- 2.23 Historic England notes that the first stage in identifying the significance of a heritage asset is by understanding its form and history. This includes the historical development, an analysis of its surviving fabric and an analysis of the setting, including the contribution setting makes to the significance of a heritage asset.
- 2.24 To assess the significance of the heritage asset, Historic England advise to describe various interests. These follow the heritage interest identified in the NPPF and PPG and are: archaeological interest, architectural interest, artistic interest and historic interest.

Local Planning Policy

Tandridge District Core Strategy (October 2008)

- 2.25 Chapter 16 of the Core Strategy sets out the District Council's approach on heritage matters. It does not prescribe any specific heritage policies, but does state emphasise that statutory protection is provided to listed buildings under the 1990 Act.

3 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The proposals have been developed through a detailed design process, which has included input from RPS regarding the potential heritage constraints of the Site, together with pre-application discussions with Historic England and the local planning authority.
- 3.2 The proposed development has been designed to respond to the setting and significance of the nearby Church of St Mary, with the layout and densities considered to respond to this listed building. The following measures have therefore been identified through this process and incorporated into the development proposals:
- Careful consideration has been given to the impact on existing public views of the church both from within the Site and from the wider area (including from Master Park). Where possible, the proposals will seek to provide new views of the church
 - Native planting will be provided to screen activity within the Site from the church and surrounding land, including the modern cemetery to the north which now forms part of the church's setting.
 - Appropriate landscaping, in the form of additional planting and open space, will be provided to soften views from the church into the development and retain its sense of visual enclosure.
- 3.3 These measures respond to comments provided by the Council's Conservation Advisor through the scoping process, where they stated that:
- Consideration should also be given to the location of open spaces to see whether a suitable buffer can be created between the development and St Mary's Church. It would also be preferable to have the view toward the church along the existing Right of Way kept open.*
- 3.4 In addition, pre-application discussions with Historic England have been held to discuss the parameters of development, including consideration of building heights. Following this, Historic England confirmed that they were "broadly content" with the development proposals.
- 3.5 The proposals are more fully described in the Design and Access Statement prepared by Omega Architects and the associated plans.
- 3.6 The following sections provides a settings assessment of the relevant heritage assets to understand how the proposals described above will affect their significance. This follows the "5-step" process set out in GPA3.

4 SETTING ASSESSMENT

Introduction

- 4.1 The following section provides an appraisal of the impacts to the setting and significance of the relevant heritage assets in the local area. This is structured to follow the 5-step process set out by Historic England and included in full at paragraph 2.21 of this report.
- 4.2 This assessment has been informed by desk-based research, including a review of the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) and Surrey Historic Environment Record (HER), together with site visits undertaken in November 2022, February 2024 and August 2024. The site visits have been used to identify heritage assets in the local area that may be affected by the development proposals and understand their settings, including in winter views. Pre-application discussions have also been held with Tandridge District Council and Historic England, together with an EIA Scoping process.
- 4.3 The assessment process has confirmed that the Site currently forms part of the setting of three listed buildings:
- Church of St Mary the Virgin, Grade I listed (NHLE 1189608), located approximately 80m east of the Site
 - Court Farm House, Grade II listed building (NHLE 1029739), located approximately 100m south-east of the Site
 - Blunt House, Grade II listed building (NHLE 1377646), located approximately 195m west of the Site, in an elevated position
- 4.4 These assets are assessed, in turn, below.

Church of St Mary the Virgin

Step 1: Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected

- 4.5 The church is a multi-phased building set on elevated ground to the west of the historic core of New Oxted. The church has a broad, 12th century tower which forms a local landmark in close and longer distance views, and exhibits a range of built fabric, including flint, rubblestone and some rendered finishes. There is evidence of the various phases of the listed building's development, with some Decorative finishes used and still extant. It is described in *The Buildings of England* as the “usual Surrey story: a slow-growth medieval church over-restored”¹.
- 4.6 The significance of the listed building is derived from its historic interest, with the medieval origins and surviving medieval fabric important elements of this historic interest. The later phases of development, which include the 14th century chancel arch and 15th century arcade and south porch, illustrate the ongoing development of the building and provide additional historic interest. The restoration of the building in the 19th century, which included the removal of historic tracery and other embellishments, is also of some historic interest in displaying the changing fashions and approaches to “restoration” prominent in the Victorian period. Despite these changes, the building also retains architectural and artistic interest.

¹ Pevsner, N. and Nairn, I. *The Buildings of England: Surrey* 92nd edition; ed. Cherry, B) (1971), p.401



Plate 1: An undated (likely mid 20th century) photograph of the Church of St Mary from the north-west. A similar current view is provided below.



Plate 2: A recent view of the Church of St Mary from the north-west.

- 4.7 The Site lies to the north-west of the Church of St Mary, a Grade I listed building, and forms part of the setting of this heritage asset. The church historically had a relatively isolated setting, forming part of a small cluster of buildings west of “New Oxted” near to Court Farm. The setting has changed through the 19th and 20th centuries with additional residential development provided to the south-

east and south-west. This has included the redevelopment of Court Farm's historic agricultural buildings. The church was historically bound by orchards to the west, which were associated with the neighbouring farm, and which would have provided a degree of visual enclosure from the surrounding rural land.

- 4.8 The Site lies to the north-west of the church and is linked to the church by a public right of way. This right of way is marked on 19th century ordnance survey mapping and appears to be a well-established, historic route. It would have provided a link to the church for parishioners within the wider, rural parish. The church is still experienced, in glimpsed views, from this footpath although the intervening planting reduces views, even in winter months (see Plate 3).
- 4.9 The wider site provides similar, glimpsed and heavily filtered views of the church beyond the planting. The fullest views of the church are permitted from the low-lying land to the south where it is seen set beyond the mature trees and existing residential development.

Step 2: Assess the degree to which these settings and views make a contribution to the significance of a heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated

- 4.10 The close setting of the listed building, which includes its churchyard and the neighbouring lanes and buildings makes an important contribution to the listed building's significance. The elevated churchyard provides additional prominence to the building, notably in views from the east, and contributes to the historic interest of the church by illustrating its historic, and ongoing, use. It includes two listed monuments associated with the church. To the south, the Grade II listed Court Farmhouse demonstrates the medieval development of the local area and the two buildings provide an important cluster of development which historically sat apart from Oxted. This area also includes modern development, in the form of residential development to the south and south-east, a car park to the east and a large cemetery extension to the north. Although the surrounding development is of indifferent quality, its scale and subsidiary nature when compared with the church means it does not notably detract from the significance of the listed building. The cemetery to the north reflects the historic use of the building and allows this area to be appreciated as one of tranquillity and reflection.
- 4.11 The listed building is also experienced in views from beyond this local area, with views from Master Park to the south of the listed building allowing for some appreciation of its architectural interest and landmark qualities. The tower and roof to the nave of the building can be seen in these views, rising above Court Farm House and set against the wooded backdrop of the hills beyond. These views allow for some appreciation of the building's architectural interest and contribute to its significance.
- 4.12 The Site lies to the north-west and is linked to the church physically by the bridleway. Views are also permitted of the tower of the church from the west and north-west areas of the Site. Views from further east are restricted by intervening planting, even in winter months. Views from the bridleway itself are heavily filtered by planting in winter months and further reduce in summer and autumn (see Plate 3). From the land to the west, the tower of the church can be seen above vegetation and within the context of existing residential development. The Site forms part of the rural setting to the listed building and is a surviving element of its historic, more isolated and rural setting. It contributes to the historic interest of the listed building as a result, though the limited appreciation of the building permitted from within the Site means that any contribution to its architectural interest is limited.
- 4.13 The footpath that crosses the Site also allows for movement into, and out of, Oxted from the wider rural surroundings. This footpath is clearly marked on the 1869-71 Ordnance Survey map (the first detailed map of the Site, see Figure 9) and is presumed to pre-date this. The footpath would have provided a direct link between the church and the surrounding agricultural land and local lanes.
- 4.14 The Site overall makes a modest contribution to the significance of the listed building as part of its wider rural setting.



Plates 3 and 4: A view of the Church of St Mary from the public right of way and a slightly fuller view from the lower lying land within the south-west part of the Site. Even in winter months, views remain limited and filtered by vegetation.

Step 3: Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on the significance or on the ability to appreciate it

- 4.15 To understand the visual impact to the setting of the church, a series of Photomontages have been prepared. These were prepared in consultation with Historic England and form part of this planning application.
- 4.16 Viewpoints 03 and 04 are taken from within the Site when approaching the church along the PROW. Viewpoint 08 provides a view from the churchyard, immediately north-west of the church, towards the Site. Viewpoints 09, 10, 15 and 16 are taken from within, or to the south of, Master Park. They demonstrate that there will be no impact to views of the church from within and across the park, with the proposed development screened by the existing planting. The other viewpoints are included for landscape purposes and are not directly relevant to this assessment. It should be noted that these viewpoints are all taken from publicly accessible locations and are included to aid assessment. However, the assessment provided below is also based on the potential impact to other, non-public views (notably from within the Site) and on non-visual elements of setting.
- 4.17 Viewpoint 04 illustrates that the current partial view of the church from the PROW within the Site would be removed, while some other views from within the Site would also be restricted or prevented by the proposed development. These views allow for only a limited appreciation of the building as a modest landscape feature and do not strongly contribute to its significance. Their removal would not therefore harm the significance of the church. This has been confirmed by Historic England in their pre-application advice, where they stated that, subject to further assessment work including consideration of additional views, they were “*broadly content with the concept of developing the site at predominantly 2 stories*”.
- 4.18 The proposals will also alter the wider, rural setting of the listed building removing the existing agricultural use. This is demonstrated by viewpoints 03, 04 and 08. This change will be most apparent when travelling from and to the listed building along the PROW, although the footpath itself will be retained and linked to a new permissive footpath looping around the Site. The current transition between the churchyard and rural land to the west will therefore be altered, reducing an element of the church’s rural setting. At present, this rural setting does contribute to the historic interest, and significance, of the listed building by illustrating its historic use as a church serving a primarily rural and agricultural parish. Although the setting of the listed building has been changed through the course of the 20th century, this further change would cause a degree of harm, albeit this would remain less than substantial and limited in magnitude.

Step 4: Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm

- 4.19 The proposed development has been assessed as causing some harm to the significance of the Church of St Mary. However, this would remain less than substantial and limited. The proposals have been developed to respond to the setting and significance of the listed building, retaining views from the southern part of the Site and providing an offset from the public footpath which provides an important physical link to the building, as well the potential for glimpsed views. These measures are included as embedded mitigation and assist in minimising the harm caused.
- 4.20 The current application is made in outline, with this assessment based on the parameters plans provided. Future reserved matters applications therefore allow for the refinement of the proposals, to include detailed design of individual units, together with landscaping and internal access roads. This will allow for the proposals to be refined to respond to local character and to the setting of the listed building, potentially further reducing the limited harm identified.

Step 5: Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes

- 4.21 The proposed development will lead to a low level of less than substantial harm to the significance of the Church of St Mary. This harm remains low due to the visual separation provided by the existing

mature planting (in both summer and winter months) and the limited visual impact that the proposal will have on the listed building. However, the alteration to an element of the building's wider rural setting will affect its historic interest and lead to a degree of less than substantial harm. This has been minimised through the design process, while future reserved matters applications provide the opportunity to further reduce any such harm.

- 4.22 This less than substantial harm must be given "great weight", as set out at paragraph 212 of the NPPF. The balance required by paragraph 215 of the NPPF is provided in the Planning Statement prepared by Andrew Black Consulting.

Court Farm House

Step 1: Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected

- 4.23 Court Farm House is a timber-framed dwelling of 16th century origins, that was extended and refaced in the 19th century. The building faces north, towards the Church of St Mary, and has a long frontage of three gabled bays. The building is now subdivided into two properties, with one occupying the western two bays and one occupying the eastern end, which also includes a single-storey extension. The entrance door to one of the units is set within a gabled porch between the middle and west bays. The building is now faced entirely in red brick and has a 19th century appearance. It has pronounced barge boards to the porch and gables. There are tripartite sash windows to the main openings, with smaller sashes to the second floor. The other unit is accessed via a porch to the east gable end, which overlooks a small drive.



Plate 5: A view from the east showing the Church of St Mary, with the distinctive gables of Court Farm House to the left.

- 4.24 The listed building is located in the same approximate location as the previous Manor House, or Grange (which is recorded in the Surrey HER). The Manor House was located close to the church, within the small, nucleated settlement to the north of the core of Oxted. The building would have sat at the centre of a large associated landholding. The current Court Farm House replaced this earlier,

likely medieval, manor house. The 1839 Oxted tithe map (see Figure 8) records that the building was owned by Charles Lee Hoskins and occupied by Richard Dartnell. The building and associated garden plot is recorded as *Oxted Court Farm*. The associated landholding was vast and included land to the north, east, south and west of the building, including the Site. The Site was mainly in arable use at this time, with the majority of it falling within Plot 563 *Stoney Field*.

- 4.25 The significance of the listed building is drawn from its historic interest as a post-medieval farmhouse, with later alterations. The surviving timber framing and historic fabric provides evidence of past construction methods and materials, while the alterations to the building in the 19th century illustrate changing fashions and tastes over time. The building also possesses some architectural interest, though this is limited and is now drawn more from its Victorian external appearance.
- 4.26 The listed building forms part of a small cluster of development centred on the church. Although the church, Court Farm House and its associated ancillary buildings were historically isolated, they now sit adjacent to residential development of St Mary's Close, with extensive parking also to the east. This has replaced the historic farmyard that sat to the east of the listed building. To the south, the setting of the listed building comprises its garden plot, with the large Master Park beyond. The Site lies to the north-west and forms part of the historic landholding of the building, although the two are now separated by dense planting and there are no views of the listed building from within the Site.

Step 2: Assess the degree to which these settings and views make a contribution to the significance of a heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated

- 4.27 The close physical relationship between Court Farm House and the church illustrates the historic importance of this nucleus of development, which would have comprised the manor house and adjacent church, with the former later replaced by Court Farm House. This close physical link therefore provides evidence of the historic development of the settlement, although the current Court Farm House replaced an earlier medieval building (and has itself been subject to further extensive alteration and subdivision).
- 4.28 The land to the north also allows for some appreciation of the building's architectural interest, although the core of the building is now hidden and the later additions and subdivision of the building are evident. It is not therefore possible to appreciate the origins of the building, or much of its historic interest. Externally, it is now experienced as a large Victorian building that has been subdivided. The loss of the associated agricultural buildings means that it is now experienced within a primarily residential and domestic setting, physically separated from the surrounding agricultural land.
- 4.29 The wider setting of the listed building includes extensive open space, with Master Park to the south and agricultural land to the north-west, comprising the Site. As discussed above, the Site was historically part of the agricultural landholding associated with the listed building. However, the agricultural use for Court Farm House has long since ceased and the Site is now physically separated by dense, mature planting. This means that it is no longer appreciated as part of the historic landholding, with the building now experienced as two dwellings, rather than a grand farmhouse with an extensive associated landholding. The Site makes no contribution to the historic interest of the listed building, with the historic association no longer evident or appreciable.

Step 3: Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on the significance or on the ability to appreciate it

- 4.30 The proposed development will alter an element of the wider, rural surroundings of the listed building. However, for the reasons given above, this element of setting no longer contributes to the significance of Court Farm House which is now appreciated as two dwellings set within a primarily residential setting. The loss of this element of setting will continue the trend seen across the 20th century, with the building being seen within an increasingly domestic setting, separated from the surrounding land. The development will therefore have no impact on the historic interest of the building, or the ability to appreciate this historic interest. The visual separation means that there will also be no impact to the architectural interest of Court Farm House, with no harm to its significance.

Step 4: Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm

- 4.31 The development will result in no harm to the significance of the listed building, with no further mitigation measures necessary. However, future reserved matters applications do still offer the opportunity to refine the designs and ensure that the materials used reflect and respond to the local vernacular and the character of Oxted.

Step 5: Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes

- 4.32 The proposed development will cause no harm to the significance of Court Farm House, with its special architectural and historic interest preserved. The development therefore conforms with section 66 of the 1990 Act and the provisions of the NPPF and local plan.

Blunt House

Step 1: Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected

- 4.33 Blunt House was constructed in the 1880s by J.M. Oldrid Scott as his own dwelling. The house is constructed in a neo-Georgian style as a deliberate imitation of the original Blunt House in Croydon, which was constructed in *circa* 1760. The listing citation notes that the building includes *Fine C18 fireplace surrounds with marble Ionic columns and broken pediments Foliage and scrollwork plaster ceilings. Rich modillion overdoors and door surrounds* which were all taken from Blunt House. Externally, the building is of two storeys plus attic and is constructed from daker brick, with red brick dressings.



Plate 6: A view of Blunt House (now known as Ridgeway Manor) from Barrow Green Road looking south.

- 4.34 The significance of the listed building is derived from its architectural interest as a good example of a neo-Georgian property utilising Classical design motifs and proportions and, more notably, its 18th century internal features. The building also has a degree of historic interest due to its association

with the earlier Blunt House and through its role as a part recreation of the earlier building, illustrating the ongoing popularity of Georgian design ideals and as a historicist development.

- 4.35 The building is now in use as a care home and is located within its own private grounds to the south of Barrow Green Road. The building sits in an elevated position relative to Oxted and the Site, affording views of the building from the surrounding area and, it is assumed, relatively far reaching views from the building, despite the mature planting within its grounds.

Step 2: Assess the degree to which these settings and views make a contribution to the significance of a heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated

- 4.36 In winter months the Site permits distant, glimpsed and heavily filtered views of the upper stages of the building. These are permitted from the elevated, northern extents of the Site and are limited in nature, as illustrated by Plate 7. In summer months these limited views decrease even further, with almost no appreciation of the building provided. From the lower land within the Site the intervening planting prevents all views of the asset.



Plate 7: A winter view from the Site towards Blunt House (indicated by red arrow).

- 4.37 Even at its fullest, therefore, the experience of the listed building is extremely limited and does not allow for an appreciation of its architectural or historic interest. The Site forms a small, incidental component of the listed building's wider setting and makes no contribution to its significance.

Step 3: Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on the significance or on the ability to appreciate it

- 4.38 The development will alter these limited views of the listed building, with a decrease in the currently available, but very limited, glimpsed views. This change will not affect the ability to appreciate the significance of the listed building and will have no impact on its historic or architectural interest as a Victorian representation and partial reconstruction of an earlier Georgian building. There will be no impact to its significance as a result.

Step 4: Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm

- 4.39 The proposals will result in no harm to the significance of Blunt House and no further mitigation measures are necessary.

Step 5: Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes

- 4.40 Para 208 balance and public benefits. The proposed development will cause no harm to the significance of Blunt House, with its special architectural and historic interest preserved. The development therefore conforms with section 66 of the 1990 Act and the provisions of the NPPF and local plan.

5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The proposed development subject to this planning application has the potential to affect the setting, and therefore significance, of three listed buildings:
- Church of St Mary the Virgin
 - Court Farm House
 - Blunt House
- 5.2 The Site currently permits views to the Church of St Mary and forms part of its wider, rural surroundings which reflects its historic interest and use as a parish church serving a partly rural parish. It makes a limited contribution to the significance of the listed building and the development of the Site, as proposed, will lead to a low degree of less than substantial harm to this significance. This harm will be caused by the further alteration of the building's rural setting, with the loss of some agricultural context and the alteration to the approach to the building along the footpath from the north-west.
- 5.3 The Site is not considered to make any contribution to the significance of Court Farm, with the historic association between the listed building and the Site no longer evident. The development will therefore cause no harm to the significance of this listed building. The Site also makes no contribution to the significance of Blunt House, forming only a peripheral part of the setting of the listed building which permits limited views that make no contribution to its architectural interest. the development will also have no impact to the significance of this listed building.
- 5.4 This report meets the requirements of paragraph 207 of the NPPF and provides sufficient information to determine this planning application. The planning balance required by paragraph 215 of the NPPF is provided in the separate Planning Statement.



APPENDICES



Mr Thomas Copp
RPS Consulting UK & Ireland
20 Farringdon Street
London
EC4A 4AB

Direct Dial: 07717 505872

Our ref: PA01198708

27 August 2024

Dear Mr Copp

Pre-application Advice

“STONEYFIELDS”, SOUTH OF BARROW GREEN ROAD, OXTED

Thank you for meeting me on site on 21st August. On the basis of the information provided to date we offer the following advice.

Advice

Significance

St Mary's is a rubblestone church with a crenelated C12 tower. The rendered chancel and aisles are C13th and C14th respectively and the porch C15th.

St Mary's sits in an elevated position atop a raised churchyard in an otherwise low-lying, contained landscape. This physical elevation reflects and reinforces the elevated status of the church as a building of primacy within the community. The escarpment in the middle distance to the north creates a strong sense of place and enclosure and provides a verdant rural backdrop to the church.

The setting of St Mary's is relatively contained. The slightly elevated position of the church in comparison to adjacent development gives its otherwise rather squat tower a degree of prominence in the immediate townscape, particularly in views from the south across Master Park and from Church Lane. The church dominates the small circular enclave of Court Farm Lane where its elevated position and the extensive verdant screening create a strong sense of intimacy.

There is little appreciable evidence of the presence of the church from further afield. Some incidental glimpsed views of the tower are obtained from the proposed site, particularly along its western edge towards the southern end, and more centrally on higher ground.



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The open nature of the setting to the south allows the significance of St Mary's as a medieval parish church and its connection to the settlement of Oxted, the nucleus of which has changed over time, to be appreciated. Views north across the park are particularly attractive with the escarpment providing a dramatic landscape backdrop to the rather diminutive tower nestled at the feet of the hills.

Impact

It is anticipated that residential development of the proposed site would have little direct impact on the setting of St Mary's due largely to the topography of the area and the extent of mature screening. From our site visit and the documentation provided to date it appears that the housing would likely sit below the line of sight in the wide views north across the park.

However, the potential impact on these views should be evidenced and additional views from the southern tip of the park at Church Lane and the northern arm of Church Lane should be included. It is anticipated that wider views will demonstrate that the church is not easily discernible in the landscape and that its setting would not be harmed by development of the site at 2-3 stories.

Should some roofscape from development encroach into this view that may not necessarily be harmful to St Mary's setting depending on the extent and density of encroachment. It will be important to maintain the sense of the Church being on the periphery of the urban centre and the looser form of development evident in views across the park.

It may be possible to minimise any encroachment into these views through careful siting, working with the topography of the site to accommodate any higher units on lower lying land. Reinforcing existing screening or providing additional screening may also minimise any impact or harm.

The glimpsed views of the tower obtained from within the site are incidental and contribute to a sense of place rather than to the setting or significance of St Mary's. Taking opportunities to retain some of the clearer views of the tower would be encouraged where they would be meaningful.

Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's policy with regards to the Historic Environment.

The NPPF requires that assets should be preserved in a manner appropriate to their



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significance and that great weight should be given to an asset's conservation (paragraphs 195 and 205). Any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset or its setting should require clear and convincing justification (paragraph 206) and should then be weighed against the public benefits of a proposal in the manner set out in paragraph 208.

Although I appreciate you are fully aware of our guidance on setting I would also draw attention to that; <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-assets/>

Position

We are broadly content with the concept of developing the site at predominately 2 stories, subject to further assessment supporting the presumption that this would not lead to harm to the setting of St Mary's Church.

Next Steps

Thank you for involving us at the pre-application stage. We consider your proposals have now reached a stage where they address any heritage considerations we may have.

Yours sincerely

Rachel White
Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas
E-mail: rachel.white@historicengland.org.uk

“STONEYFIELDS”, SOUTH OF BARROW GREEN ROAD, OXTEAD Pre-application Advice

List of information on which the above advice is based Information Provided



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CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN

Listed on the National Heritage List for England.

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Official list entry

Heritage Category:**Listed Building**

Grade:**I**

List Entry Number:**1189608**

Date first listed:**11-Jun-1958**

List Entry Name:**CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN**

Statutory Address 1:**CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN, CHURCH LANE**

This List entry helps identify the building designated at this address for its special architectural or historic interest.

Unless the List entry states otherwise, it includes both the structure itself and any object or structure fixed to it (whether inside or outside) as well as any object or structure within the curtilage of the building.

For these purposes, to be included within the curtilage of the building, the object or structure must have formed part of the land since before 1st July 1948.

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Drawing No. 3129-C-1006-SK-G Skech Site Layout in Context
Proposed Representative view locations (July 2024)
3 no. photos from inside the site taken in winter months with no crop



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Location

Statutory Address:**CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN, CHURCH LANE**

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County:**Surrey**

District:**Tandridge (District Authority)**

Parish:**Oxted**

National Grid Reference:**TQ 39045 52984**

Details

TQ 35SE OXTED C.P. CHURCH LANE

6/227 Church of St. Mary 11.6.58 the Virgin

GV 1

Church. C12 tower. C13 Chancel, C14 aisles and C15 porch with C19 restoratibn. Rubblestone with brick dressings, Bargate stone to tower, rendered chancel. Plain tiled roofs; tower roof obscured by stone coped, battlemented, parapet. Nave and aisle with tower to west end, vestry to north and chancel chapel and porch to south. Square, unbuttressed tower with renewed Decorated detail on bell stage. North aisle east window original, C14, remainder renewed except for east window with planed down tracery, reduced in 1637. Porch with hood moulding to arch and Cobham arms in spandrels. C14 door with ogee tracing and carved human heads to panels.

Interior: tiled floor, 3 bay nave arcades of compound piers with round shafts of quatrefoil section. C14 chancel arch raised in C19 restoration dying into imposts.

Fittings: C13 priest's door in chancel. Arched piscina on south chancel wall. Octagonal stone font with quatrefoil panel decoration on octagonal buttressed stem.

Stained glass: C14 Evangelists in tracery lights of East window. Burne Jones aisle windows to north and south by Morris and Co. 1908. Richly coloured with greens and reds

Monuments: South chancel wall: To William Finch died 1728. Baroque. White and grey marble aedicular type with raised inscription, flanking scrolls, double cherubs below and triangular pediment above, surmounted by Coat of Arms. Brass to John Hoskins. 1613. Standing figure 9 inches high. Brass to Thomas Hoskins 1611 with female standing figures

North chancel wall: To John Aldersley. Died 1616. Plaster and stone. Central arched niche with kneeling figures in profile. Ribbon and fruit decoration to arch, flanking Pilasters with shield above in strapwork surround.

PEVSNER: Buildings of England: Surrey (1971) pp. 401-2.

Listing NGR: TQ3904252982

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Legacy System:**LBS**

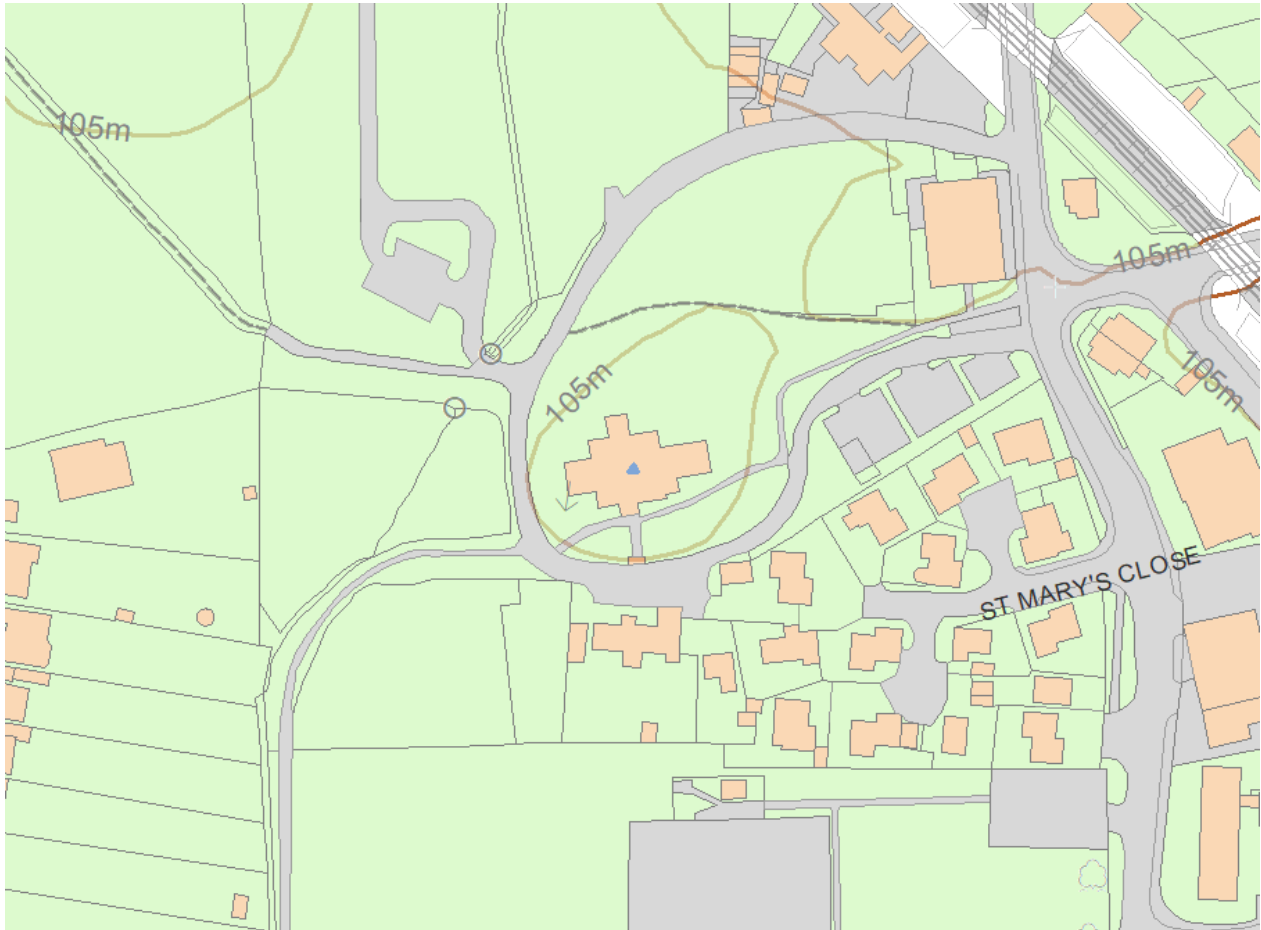
Sources

Books and journals

Pevsner, N, Nairn, I Rev. by Cherry, The Buildings of England: Surrey, (1971), 401-402

Legal

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COURT FARM HOUSE

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Official list entry

Heritage Category:**Listed Building**

Grade:**II**

List Entry Number:**1029739**

Date first listed:**19-Nov-1984**

List Entry Name:**COURT FARM HOUSE**

Statutory Address 1:**COURT FARM HOUSE, CHURCH LANE**

This List entry helps identify the building designated at this address for its special architectural or historic interest.

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Location

Statutory Address:**COURT FARM HOUSE, CHURCH LANE**

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County:**Surrey**

District:**Tandridge (District Authority)**

Parish:**Oxted**

National Grid Reference:**TQ 39045 52944**

Details

TQ 35SE OXTED C.P. CHURCH LANE

6/226 Court Farm House II

Farmhouse, now divided. C16 with late C19 extension to right. Timber framed clad in red brick with tile hung gables; plain tiled roof, end ridge stack to right and large, star shaped, ridge stack to left of centre. 2 storeys with attics under 2 gabled, bargeboard dormers to rear; 1 flat roof dormer on front left, and 3 gable lit attics across front. 3 sash windows across the first floor, casement windows in square ground floor extensions projecting to front left under hipped roof. C19 4 panel door to right of centre under gauged brick head in gabled and bargeboarded brick porch. Further door in right side of left hand extension under open weather- boarded gable porch hood on wooden supports. Tile hung wing to rear left.

Interior: some framing to left half of house mainly on ceiling with stop chamfered joists. Double bread oven, large deep brick fireplace with wooden lintel.

Listing NGR: TQ3904552944

Legacy

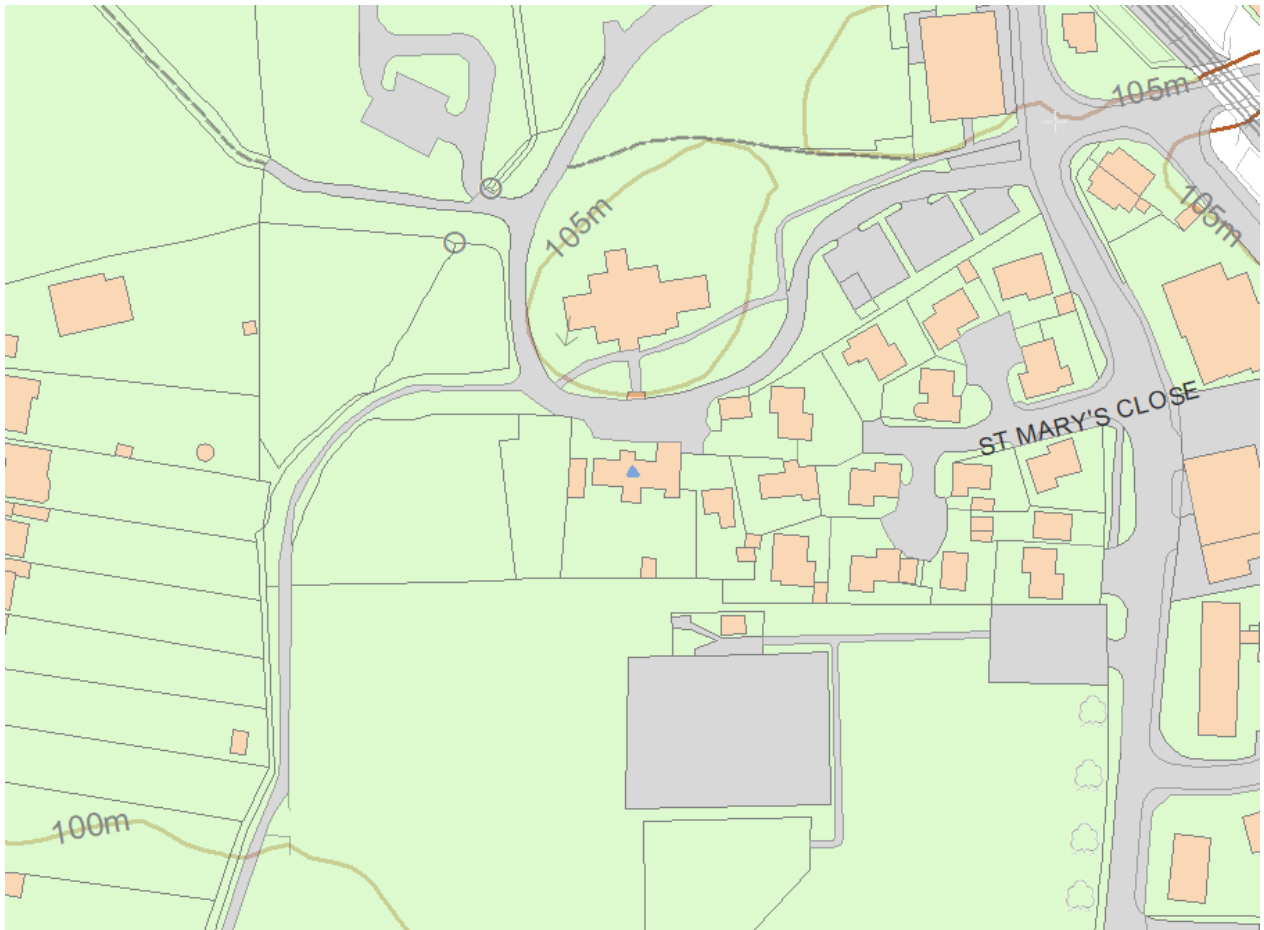
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Official list entry

Heritage Category:**Listed Building**

Grade:**II**

List Entry Number:**1377646**

Date first listed:**19-Nov-1984**

List Entry Name:**BLUNT HOUSE**

Statutory Address 1:**BLUNT HOUSE, BARROW GREEN ROAD**

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Location

Statutory Address:**BLUNT HOUSE, BARROW GREEN ROAD**

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County:**Surrey**

District:**Tandridge (District Authority)**

Parish:**Oxted**

National Grid Reference:**TQ 38443 53022**

Details

TQ 35SE OXTED C.P. BARROW GREEN ROAD

6/206 Blunt House II

House, now Clinic. Circa 1886 by J.M. Oldrid Scott for himself. In Neo-Georgian style. Brown brick with red brick dressings; plain tiled hipped roofs with 2 stone banded ridge stacks to left and right of centre. 2 storeys and attic under 5 hipped roof dormers, outer and centre dormers glazing bar sashes in architrave surrounds, dormers left and right of centre casements. Large flat tile hung roof extension above connecting stacks. 5 bays, end bays projecting with brick string course over ground floor and dentilled eaves. Glazing bar sash windows under gauged brick heads; stone keystone to double light sash windows either side of first floor centre, paired, round arched windows to ground floor. Central part glazed door with wooden tracery bars and fielded panels behind doubled outer doors. Architrave surround with voussoirs to top in bonded block rusticated stone porch with Doric columns and guttae frieze surmounted by four spherical finials, approached up a flight of 4 steps with quadrant walls have obelisks. 3 bay lower range to left with mixed casement and sash window fenestration. Single storey extension to extreme left Rear front: 7 bays with end 2 projecting on each side. 5 hipped roof sash window dormers, brick stringcourse over ground floor and brick panels below windows. Balustraded stone terrace across front of ground floor.

Interior: Fine C18 fireplace surrounds with marble Ionic columns and broken pediments Foliage and scrollwork

plaster ceilings. Rich modillion overdoors and door surrounds The internal features were brought from Blunt House in Croydon, built c.1760 by Abraham Swan and Richard Peers. The original house providing the model for the design of J.M. Oldrid Scott.

Listing NGR: TQ3844353022

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