



Proof of Evidence - Heritage

Land at The Old
Cottage, Station Road,
Lingfield

Dr Jonathan Edis

PINS REF: APP/M3645/W/22/3309334

LPA REF: TA/2022/685

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- App. 2 HCUK Heritage Impact Assessment 2022 (CD 1.43)**
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- App. 4 Bidwells Heritage Statement 2019**

1. Introduction

Qualifications and experience

- 1.1** I am Dr Jonathan Edis. I hold the degrees of BA (Hons) in History, MA with distinction in Architectural Building Conservation, and PhD,¹ and I am a Member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (MCIfA) and a Member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC). I have more than forty years of continuous professional employment in the public and private heritage sectors, including six years with the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME),² ten years as a Conservation Officer with Bedfordshire County Council, and ten years as Head of Historic Buildings in CgMs Limited³ 2000-2010. I am a founding director of HCUK Group, a company which since 2010 has provided independent heritage consultancy and other services. The company works in all sectors (e.g. housing, renewables, commercial, infrastructure) throughout the country.
- 1.2** I have advised on thousands of cases involving change to heritage assets and their settings. I have provided expert heritage evidence at more than 150 public inquiries and many other appeals involving heritage assets, and I have given expert evidence on heritage matters in both civil and criminal courts.

Statement of truth

- 1.3** I understand my duty to the inquiry and have complied, and will continue to comply, with that duty. I confirm that this evidence identifies all facts which I regard as being relevant to the opinion that I have expressed and that the Inquiry's attention has been drawn to any matter which would affect the validity of that opinion. I believe that the facts stated within this proof are true and that the opinions expressed are correct. I do not have a conditional fee arrangement.

¹ My MA dissertation and my PhD thesis both covered aspects of funerary monuments in English churches between c.1485 and c.1625, so I am familiar with buildings such as the Church of St Peter and St Paul.

² During which I qualified as a Cartographic Draughtsman trained in the interpretation of vertical and oblique air photographs for the purposes of mapping cropmarks, soilmarks, earthworks, and other archaeological features.

³ CgMs was later taken over by RPS, and is now part of Tetra Tech.

Background to this appeal (APP/M3645/W/22/3309334)

- 1.4** My first involvement in this matter was in December 2021. I was the author of the Heritage Impact Assessment (March 2022) which was submitted with application TA/2022/685 (Appendix 2 and CD 1.43).
- 1.5** Validated on 20 June 2022, outline planning application TA/2022/685 (with all matters reserved except for access and layout) envisaged a residential development of 99 dwellings (40% affordable) with associated access, formal open space, landscaping and car parking on land at The Old Cottage, Station Road, Lingfield. I understand that this piece of land is now locally known as Star Fields. The application was appealed for non-determination, and officers of the council then concluded that the application would have been refused for six reasons, of which the second related to heritage, as follows:
- "The proposal would fail to preserve or enhance character and appearance of Lingfield Conservation Area and would be harmful to the setting and significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets. The application fails to set out clear and convincing justification to outweigh the harm. Therefore, the proposal fails to accord with the above identified national, regional and local policies and legislation, in particular Policy DP20 of the Tandridge Local Plan Part 2: Detailed Policies (2014), and Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021)."*
- 1.6** My evidence is provided on behalf of the Appellants, Woolbro Morris Limited, and it addresses the council's second reason for refusal of planning permission. It is limited to the assessment of the significance of heritage assets, and the effect of change on the significance of those assets, as originally set out in the Heritage Impact Assessment of March 2022 (Appendix 2 and CD 1.43), which was compiled by myself and submitted with application TA/2022/685. My evidence does not comment on the balancing exercise, which is contained in the evidence of Mr Evans of ROK, and it does not arrive at a conclusion in respect of an "internal" heritage balance. Consideration of effects on the setting of heritage assets inevitably has some connection with landscape and visual matters, so my evidence should be read in conjunction with that of Mr Croot of LDA.
- 1.7** My evidence is based on observations made during three site visits on 19 January 2022, 19 May 2020 and 7 July 2023. I am grateful to Mr Christopher Reynolds, the

Heritage Officer for Surrey County Council, for facilitating the visit to Pollard House on 7 July 2023, which we undertook jointly.⁴ Therefore, I have seen the site in winter conditions, with trees and hedges bare of leaves, and in summer.

Structure of my evidence

1.8 My assessments of significance and impact remain essentially unchanged since I compiled my Heritage Impact Assessment in March 2022 (Appendix 2 and CD 1.43), as do my main conclusions, which are as set out in the last paragraph of Chapter 5 of that document as follows:

"The residual (post-mitigation) effect of the proposal would, on current evidence, be significant.^[5] Even though the application site itself is not demonstrably of intrinsic architectural or historic interest, the effect on open space within the conservation area, and on the setting of the conservation area, would be noticeable in terms of character and appearance. In overall terms, the effect of the proposal on the special interest of the designated heritage assets would be to erode their significance, causing less than substantial harm to that significance, within the category in paragraph 202 of the NPPF. The extent of harm would vary in each case. Using the tabular approach in Appendix 1,^[6] it would be medium in terms of the effect on the significance of the conservation area, through the reduction of private open space in Star Field, and the effect of new development within the setting of the conservation area on the west side of Station Road. It would be low in terms of the effect on views of the spire of the parish church, bearing in mind that many views would remain, and public access to Star Field would, in fact, be increased. It would be low, tending strongly towards negligible, in terms of the abstract effect on other listed buildings in the core group to the west of Church Road. It would also be low, tending strongly towards negligible, in terms of the largely abstract effect on the group of listed buildings at New Place. Insofar as there would be medium effects in respect of the conservation area, they would tend towards the lower end of that band rather than the higher end - which is to say that they would not be so serious as to be incapable of being outweighed by public benefit. The effects on the non-designated heritage assets would be a further consideration in the balancing exercise. There would be no material effect on the

⁴ I am also grateful to those on Lingfield Parish Council, who assisted in facilitating the visit.

⁵ "Significant" meaning material or noticeable, similar to the EIA sense of the word.

⁶ Meaning Appendix 1 of the Heritage Impact Assessment, which is Appendix 2 of my proof.

significance of Cyder Barn. The effect on the locally listed group at New Place Farm would not be determinative in itself, given that the principal effects and issues relate to the statutory considerations relating the conservation area and the grade I listed church.”

- 1.9** The national policy framework (i.e. the NPPF) has not changed in respect of heritage since I prepared the Heritage Impact Assessment, so (to save repeating it here, within my proof) this is as set out in Chapter 2 of Appendix 2. Insofar as the council relies on Policy DP20 of the Tandridge Local Plan Part 2: Detailed Policies (2014), I address this matter below. My initial assessment of the significance of heritage assets is to be found in Chapter 3 of Appendix 2, and is largely unchanged save mainly for the further observations I make in respect of that part of Star Fields lying within the conservation area (Chapter 4 below). My initial assessment of the impact of the proposal on the setting and significance of heritage assets is to be found in Chapter 4 of Appendix 2, and is augmented and clarified by observations and comments below. I address the issues of significance and impact on listed buildings (and locally listed buildings) in Chapter 2 below, and issues of significance and impact on the conservation area in Chapter 3 below.
- 1.10** I have sought to contain most of my observations on the various objections to the proposal, and my comments on the cases for the council and the “Rule 6” parties, within Chapter 4 below.
- 1.11** I present a full visual appraisal of the listed buildings and the conservation area to the inquiry, with particular reference to the grade I listed Church of St Peter and St Paul (Appendix 1). Although this has been rather laborious to compile, it is intended to dispel the suggestion (which might be inferred from some of the objections to the proposal) that Station Road and Star Fields are some of the most important places from which to appreciate the significance of the Church and the conservation area. That is simply not the case.

Draft site allocation

- 1.12** The history of the draft allocation of the site is contained in the evidence of Mr Evans. I have seen a Heritage Statement prepared by Bidwells (for Woolbro Homes) dated September 2019, which was prepared to assess the soundness of the allocation (Appendix 4). Broadly speaking, I am in agreement with Bidwells’

assessment of heritage significance in Chapter 7 of that document. However, the Bidwells Heritage Statement was based on an estimated development capacity for sixty dwellings, so it was dealing with different circumstances and a different quantum of development compared with application TA/2022/685. The impact assessment in Chapter 9 of the Bidwells document was described as a “potential” impact assessment, and my understanding is that there was no layout on which to base the observations in question. Therefore, exact comparisons between the Bidwells assessment and my own assessment are not possible.

Mitigation

1.13 After my first site visit in January 2022 I sought to mitigate the effect of the proposal in discussion with my client’s team. This is described in my Heritage Impact Assessment of March 2022, at paragraphs 4.12 and 4.13 (Appendix 2). My suggestions, which were adopted by my client, had the dual aim of addressing the relationship of the proposed development to the conservation area and the setting of the Church at what I considered to be the most sensitive part of the proposed development, which was in the north-western corner. Therefore, the layout of that part of the development, in particular, was influenced by my advice. Mitigation is also relevant to the evidence of Mr Croot and Mr Evans.

2. Setting of listed buildings

Introduction

2.1 The starting point for my analysis of the effect of the proposal on the setting of listed buildings is in paragraph 4.5 of my Heritage Impact Assessment (Appendix 2). In that paragraph I acknowledged that there will be significant effects on the setting of the Church, in that views of the spire on the skyline will be reduced when looking from Station Road and from the south-eastern part of the application site. However there will be no direct visual impact on views of other listed buildings in the core group to the west of Church Road. I also acknowledged that people who are familiar with Lingfield may feel that there will be some effect on the abstract appreciation of the group, insofar as the spire acts as its geographical marker – but that is not the same as an actual reduction in the significance of individual buildings or structures within the group. I noted that it would be difficult to suggest that the grade II listed Jewell, Hale and Shore tombs in the churchyard would become less significant as a result of the significant change in the view of the church spire when seen from Station Road and the south-eastern part of the application site. I concluded by saying that it is important not to exaggerate the harm to the significance of the group as a whole.

2.2 Since preparing my Heritage Impact Assessment in March 2022 (Appendix 2), a Secretary of State appeal decision has endorsed the following observations from Inspector Griffiths as regards the extent of harm where a development only affects the setting of a designated heritage asset [CD 6.1]:⁷

"12.50 In cases where the impact is on the setting of a designated heritage asset, it is only the significance that asset derives from its setting that is affected. All the significance embodied in the asset itself would remain intact. In such a case, unless the asset concerned derives a major proportion of its significance from its setting, then it is very difficult to see how an impact on its setting can advance a long way along the scale towards substantial harm to significance." [CD 6.1]

⁷ Appeal Reference APP/H5390/V/21/3277137 (dated 4 July 2022) - paragraph 13 of the SoS's decision [CD 6.1].

2.3 I have sought to be as clear as possible as to the heritage significance of all the sixteen listed buildings in the vicinity of the appeal site, and as to the contribution that their setting makes to their significance, in accordance with the Secretary of State’s approach as outlined above.

2.4 As well as the sixteen listed buildings, I also address the locally listed buildings at the end of this chapter.

Relevant listed buildings

2.5 There are sixteen listed buildings in the vicinity of the appeal site, falling into two groups which I here describe as the Church Group (thirteen buildings) and the New Place Group (three buildings). The locations of the listed buildings in the Church Group are shown in Appendix 1, Figure 3, and the locations of the listed (and locally listed) buildings in the New Place Group are shown in Appendix 1, Figure 4.

2.6 Although my own view is that the effects of the appeal proposal on the significance of Church and New Place are the primary considerations for the Inspector, various commentators have looked at other listed buildings in the groups described above, including myself, but there has not been complete consistency. For example, Surrey County Council’s Heritage Officer has raised specific issues to do with views from two listed buildings (Pollard Cottage/House and Church House, both in the Church Group), and the Bidwells Heritage Statement of 2019 (Appendix 4) assessed effects on other listed buildings in the Church Group, but not all of them.⁸ Historic England has made no reference to several highly graded listed buildings in the Church Group [CD 1.2]. Therefore, I set out a comprehensive account of the listed buildings below, with summary descriptions, and notes on the setting of each building, with specific reference to the role of the appeal site. I later expand on the specific subjects of group value, and key views, and the rural/original characteristics of the setting of the Church and New Place in particular, after introducing the sixteen listed buildings in question.

2.7 As an opening observation, it will become apparent that the Church Group and the New Place Group were originally more physically separate from each other than they are today. The connectivity provided by the public footpath running east-west

⁸ The three listed tombs in the churchyard were omitted (Shore, Hale and Jewell) – CD 1.2 and CD 8.3

through part of the appeal site, joining Church Road to Station Road, seems to have arisen after the arrival of the railway in 1884 - a point on which I comment further below.

THE CHURCH GROUP (Appendix 1, Figure 3)

Church of St Peter and St Paul, Church Road, Lingfield

Grade I

First listed 11 June 1958

References: [CD 8.3], Appendix 1, Figures 3 and 5 to 12.

Summary description: 14th century, largely rebuilt in sandstone in 1431 by Sir Reginald Cobham. Vestry added in 1490. Restored in the 1840s and the 20th century. Includes tower and spire, nave with aisle to north and short aisle to south, chancel to east with north Lady Chapel, chapel and vestry to the south. Fittings include stained glass, font, and 15th century screens. Monuments include several particularly fine table tombs to the Cobham family, and what may be the finest group of brasses in Surrey.

Setting: The finest, most sensitive, most immediate, most original and most rural part of the setting of the Church is within the churchyard, and the churchyard extension to the east, and in the grouping of buildings and tombs in the immediate vicinity, particularly The Guest House, The College, Old Town House, Church House, Pollard House, and three tombs in the churchyard (Jewell, Shore and Hale families). The tower and spire of the Church also act as a visual landmark or feature over a wider area, most of which has a suburban character. Beyond that, the Church spire tends to be more of a geographical marker than a landmark. With reference to the visual analysis in Appendix 1, the general position can be summarised as follows:

- Close views within the rural churchyard or in the context of vernacular buildings (up to c.140m in places): Appendix 1, Figures 7 to 19,⁹ 25, 26 and 30 to 32.

⁹ Albeit Figures 16 and 18 actually have the church immediately to the back of the observer.

- Feature/landmark views in suburban village areas (typically c.90m to c.200m): Appendix 1, Figures 21 to 24, 27 to 29, 33, and 34.
- Medium distance views as a geographical marker (up to c.560m): Appendix 1, Figures 20, and 52 to 55.¹⁰ See also Appendix 2, Figures 14 and 16.

Appeal site: The appeal site is not visible from the churchyard, although it provides what are currently private views of the upper part of the tower and the spire from the east (Appendix 2, Figures 14 and 16). The appeal site plays only a very small part in the significance of the Church, which is largely contained in its archaeological and artistic fabric.

Pollard House, Pollard Cottage, Church Road, Lingfield

Grade I

First listed 11 June 1958

Description amended 25 April 1984

References: [CD 8.3], Appendix 1, Figures 3, 31, 32 and 50.

Summary description: 15th and 16th century Wealden type timber framed house with jettied end bay first floor right, and original shop front.

Setting: The finest and most important aspect of the setting of Pollard House is the grouping with other nearby buildings of a similar age, notably the Church and Church House, but also including Old Town House, The College, and The Guest House. It is part of an important entrance to the southern side of the churchyard.

Appeal site: The appeal site is visually and physically separated from this listed building by the 20th century pub known as The Star Inn, and it makes almost no contribution to the significance of the listed building. Figure 81 in Appendix 1 demonstrates that the appeal site does not play any particular role in the heritage significance of Pollard House.

¹⁰ Albeit the hedge obscures the view to the spire for pedestrians in Figures 54 and 55, at least in the summer months.

Church House, Star Inn Cottages, Church Road, Lingfield

Grade II*

First listed 11 June 1958

Description amended 25 April 1984

References: [CD 8.3], Appendix 1, Figures 3 and 30 to 32

Summary description: Former inn with shops to the left, now divided, 16th century to rear with early 18th century front, altered in the 19th century. Timber frame and brick.

Setting: Star Inn Cottages and Church House are said in the list description [CD 8.3] to form an important part of the approach to the Church. The finest and most important aspect of the setting is the grouping with other nearby buildings of a similar age, notably the Church and Pollard House, but also including Old Town House, The College, and The Guest House.

Appeal site: The appeal site is visually and physically separated from this listed building by the 20th century pub known as The Star Inn, and it makes almost no contribution to the significance of the listed building.

Old Town House and Old Town Cottage, Church Road, Lingfield

Grade II*

First listed 11 June 1958

Description amended 10 June 2009

References: [CD 8.3], Appendix 1, Figures 3, 13, 14 and 31.

Summary description: 16th and 17th century L-plan timber framed house, partly reworked by Leonard Stokes in a vernacular revival style following a fire in 1908.

Setting: The finest and most important aspect of the setting is the grouping with other nearby buildings of a similar age, notably the Church, Church House, Pollard House, The College, and The Guest House.

Appeal site: The appeal site is visually and physically separated from this listed building by Church House and by the 20th century pub known as The Star Inn. The appeal site makes no contribution to the significance of the listed building. Any connection between the appeal site and Old Town House exists only at an abstract level.

The College, including former kitchen to south-west, College Close, Lingfield

Grade II*

First listed 11 June 1958

Description amended 25 April 1984

References: [CD 8.3], Appendix 1, Figures 3, 14 to 16.

Summary description: A brown brick house of c.1700 reusing some 15th century materials, restored 1973. Former Kitchen to rear south west. Built on the site of the Old College founded in 1431 by Reginald, Lord Cobham, for the training of Chaplains, several of whom are buried and commemorated in the Parish Church adjacent to the site.

Setting: The finest and most important aspect of the setting is the grouping with other nearby buildings of earlier origin, notably the Church, The Guest House, and Old Town House.

Appeal site: The appeal site is visually and physically separated from this listed building by the Church, Church House, Old Town House, and by the 20th century pub known as The Star Inn. The appeal site makes no contribution to the significance of the listed building. Any connection between the appeal site and The College exists only at an abstract level.

Garden wall to the E of the College, College Close, Lingfield

Grade II

Date first listed 25 April 1984

References: [CD 8.3], Appendix 1, Figures 3 and 16.

Summary description: 16th century stone wall. Coursed sandstone blocks with brick band triangular stone coping.

Setting: The finest and most important aspect of the setting is the grouping with other nearby buildings, notably The College and the Church.

Appeal site: The appeal site is visually and physically separated from this listed wall by the Church, Church House, Old Town House, and by the 20th century pub known as The Star Inn. The appeal site makes no contribution to the significance of the listed wall. Any connection between the appeal site and the wall exists only at an abstract level.

The Guest House, Vicarage Road, Lingfield

Grade II*

First listed 11 June 1958

References: [CD 8.3], Appendix 1, Figures 3, 17, 18 and 25.

Summary description: Timber framed Wealden type house of 15th century origin, now used as a library.

Setting: The finest and most important aspect of the setting is the grouping with other nearby buildings, notably the Church and Old Town House.

Appeal site: The appeal site is visually and physically separated from this listed building by the Church, Church House, Old Town House, and by the 20th century pub known as The Star Inn. The appeal site makes no contribution to the significance of the listed building. Any connection between the appeal site and the Guest House exists only at an abstract level.

Church Gate Cottage, Church Road, Lingfield

Grade II

Date first listed 11 June 1958

References: [CD 8.3], Appendix 1, Figures 3 and 13, and Appendix 4, internal page 29..

Summary description: Late 16th century timber framed cottage with brown and red brick cladding.

Setting: The finest and most important aspect of the setting is the grouping with other nearby buildings, notably the Church, Church House and Old Town House. The list description mentions that Church Gate Cottage forms an important part of the impressive approach to the Church.

Appeal site: The appeal site is visually and physically separated from this listed building by part of Church House and by the 20th century pub known as The Star Inn. The appeal site makes no contribution to the significance of the listed building. Any connection between the appeal site and Church Gate Cottage exists only at an abstract level.

Hale Tomb, 10 yards SW of the Church of St Peter and St Paul, Lingfield

Grade II

Date first listed 25 April 1984

References: [CD 8.3], Appendix 1, Figures 3 and 8.

Summary description: Chest tomb, Hale family, c.1816.

Setting: The finest and most important aspect of the setting is the grouping with other gravestones and monuments, and nearby buildings, notably the Church, also but including the other main buildings in the Church Group.

Appeal site: The appeal site is visually and physically separated from this tomb by the Church, Old Town House, and other buildings. The appeal site makes no contribution to the significance of the listed building. Any connection between the appeal site and this tomb exists only at an abstract level.

Shore (?) Tomb, 20 yards NW of N aisle of the Church of St Peter and St Paul, Lingfield

Grade II

Date first listed 25 April 1984

References: [CD 8.3], Appendix 1, Figures 3 and 17.

Summary description: Chest Tomb. Dedicated to John Shore (?).

Setting: The finest and most important aspect of the setting is the grouping with other gravestones and monuments, and nearby buildings, notably the Church, also but including the other main buildings in the Church Group.

Appeal site: The appeal site is visually and physically separated from this tomb by the Church, Old Town House, and other buildings. The appeal site makes no contribution to the significance of the listed building. Any connection between the appeal site and this tomb exists only at an abstract level.

Jewell Tomb, 1 foot N of N chancel chapel wall, Church of St Peter and St Paul, Lingfield

Grade II

Date first listed 25 April 1984

References: [CD 8.3], Appendix 1, Figures 3 and 11.

Summary description: Chest tomb to Elizabeth Jewell, c.1772.

Setting: The finest and most important aspect of the setting is the grouping with other gravestones and monuments, and nearby buildings, notably the Church, also but including the other main buildings in the Church Group.

Appeal site: The appeal site is visually and physically separated from this tomb by the Church, Old Town House, and other buildings. The appeal site makes no contribution to the significance of the listed building. Any connection between the appeal site and this tomb exists only at an abstract level.

Barn 15 yard SW of Old Town House, Church Road, Lingfield

Grade II

Date first listed 25 April 1984

References: [CD 8.3], Appendix 3, Figure 3, Appendix 4, internal page 32.

Summary description: 17th century timber-framed barn, said in the list description to be included for group value only.

Setting: Part of the group with other nearby buildings, notably Old Town House and the Church.

Appeal site: The appeal site is visually and physically separated from this listed building by the 20th century pub known as The Star Inn. The appeal site makes no contribution to the significance of the listed building. Any connection between the appeal site and the barn exists only at an abstract level.

The Barn, Church Road, Lingfield

Grade II

Date first listed 25 April 1984

References: [CD 8.3], Appendix 1, Figure 3, Appendix 4, internal page 31.

Summary description: 16th and 17th century timber framed barn, now a house, formerly associated with Pollard House.

Setting: Part of the group with other nearby buildings, notably Pollard House and the Church.

Appeal site: The appeal site is visually and physically separated from this listed building by the 20th century pub known as The Star Inn. The appeal site makes no contribution to the significance of the listed building. Any connection between the appeal site and the barn exists only at an abstract level.

THE NEW PLACE GROUP (Appendix 1, Figure 4)

New Place, Station Road, Lingfield

Grade II*

Date first listed 11 June 1958

References: [CD 8.3], Appendix 1, Figures 4 and 35 to 38.

Summary description: House, dated 1617 in gable over entrance, restored in the 1920s by John Hopkins. Horsham stone ashlar with Horsham slab roofs. Red and blue brick stacks. L-shaped on plan with gabled lower wing projecting to right. Courtyard formed in the re-entrant angle.

Setting: New Place faces confidently eastward, addressing Station Road, but it has contained, private grounds that tend to give it an introspective character when seen from the relatively recently created public footpath (of which more below), and from the west. The setting includes Station Road, and the appeal site, but New Place turns its back on the Church Group and on the historic core of Lingfield, and on Star Fields. The arrival of the railway station in the late 19th century would surely have had a noticeable effect on the original rural surroundings of New Place – a point developed further below. Figures 67 and 71 to 80 in Appendix 1 demonstrate that the setting of New Place is, to a large extent, historically and visually contained within what I describe as the Inner Garden (enclosed by the grade II listed wall probably coeval with the original building) and the Outer Garden, which appears to be a kitchen garden of 19th century origin, now planted with an avenue of lime trees.

Appeal site: The fields within the appeal site were all part of New Place Farm at the time of the 1841 census (Appendix 1, Figure 60), which is to say that they, and New Place, were all owned by Caroline Phillips and occupied (leased) by a farmer called Bowrah. All the fields were in use as arable, pasture and orchards. There was no attempt to landscape or optimise the land as part of a park, or as part of a view from (or towards) New Place. Recent archaeological work on the appeal site (Appendix 3) has revealed nothing to suggest a specific connection between the appeal site and New Place (see also Chapter 3 below). The main connection has to do with ownership. Over time, the residential conversion of the former agricultural buildings at New Place Farm, and the reworking of Heatherwell House (Appendix 1,

Figure 57) have surely reduced the strength of the visual and contextual connection that the appeal site might once have had with New Place. In its present form, New Place only derives a very small proportion of its significance from the appeal site, as can be seen in the visual analysis in Figures 67 and 71 to 80 in Appendix 1. Most of the significance of New Place lies in its architectural and archaeological fabric.

Garden wall to New Place, Station Road, Lingfield

Grade II

Date first listed 11 June 1958

References: [CD 8.3], Appendix 1, Figures 4 and 38

Summary description: 17th century coursed sandstone wall with stone piers.

Setting: The wall is best seen and experienced in public views along the footpath bordering the northern side of New Place. Privately, it can be seen from that part of the garden of New Place which I call the Inner Garden in Figures 67 and 71 to 80 in Appendix 1. It forms the perimeter to the Inner Garden of New Place, which is clearly the oldest part of the curtilage, and probably the only part to be landscaped for the enjoyment of the building in its original form. An outer compartment, which I have referred to as the Outer Garden in Figures 67 and 71 to 80 in Appendix 1 is enclosed by a brick wall, which is of later date than the grade II listed stone wall. I would estimate that the brick wall was constructed in the 19th century, possibly as a kitchen garden outside the Inner Garden. It has been planted by the present owner with an avenue of lime trees, which is the furthest extent to which the setting of New Place has been landscaped or optimised (Appendix 1, Figure 79).

Appeal site: The connection between the wall and the appeal site is largely abstract, rather than visual. The appeal site does not contribute to the significance of the grade II listed stone wall, as is evident from Appendix 1, Figures 67 and 71 to 80.

The Old Cottage, Station Road, Lingfield

Grade II

Date first listed 11 June 1958

References: [CD 8.3], Appendix 2, Figure 4.

Summary description: 18th century house, restored in the early 20th century by E.G. Dawber. Red brick with blue brick headers.

Setting: The Old Cottage faces east onto Station Road. Although it forms a spatial group with New Place, being a near neighbour, it seems to have had a distinct history. Rather than being part of New Place Farm at the time of the tithe map (Appendix 1, Figure 60) it was in different ownership and occupation (owned by John Ladbroke and occupied by John Dives).¹¹

Appeal site: There is little visual or historical connection between the appeal site and The Old Cottage, and the listed building does not derive any significance from the appeal site (see Appendix 1, Figure 71, for the visual relationship between the garden of The old Cottage and the appeal site, as seen from New Place).

Group value

2.8 The two groups (the Church Group and the New Place Group) are groups in the sense that they are physically in two clusters. Within those clusters, there are complex relationships between the assets. As a generality, I have considered it theoretically possible for effects on one heritage asset to have secondary effects on another asset in the same group. That is not to say that there will be secondary effects, but it is possible. Group value relies not just on spatial considerations and intervisibility, but also on historical connections. For example, The Guest House and Old Town House are not intervisible (they are separated by the Church), but I would suggest that there is a sufficient historical connection between them to consider that they have value as part of the same group. This introduces a range of abstract and visual considerations, to which I turn below, looking first at the Church Group, and then at the New Place Group.

¹¹ Ownership of the two buildings may have been common in the 20th century (Lord Lingfield, pers. comm.) so the position may not have been constant over time. The buildings are not now in common ownership.

THE CHURCH GROUP

- 2.9** All the significance physically embodied in the Church of St Peter and St Paul itself (Appendix 1, Figures 5 to 12) will remain intact. As I have said above, the physical fabric of the building makes up a very large part of its significance, so a very large element of the significance of the designated heritage asset will be unaffected by the appeal proposal.
- 2.10** In a similar vein, all the significance physically embodied in the Church Group will remain intact, because there will be no physical change to any of the thirteen listed buildings in that group. The vast majority of the significance of the Church Group will be preserved unaffected.
- 2.11** Turning to the surroundings of the Church Group as a whole, a very large part of the setting will be unaffected and preserved intact. All the views of the Church Group in Figures 7 to 34 of Appendix 1 will remain unchanged. The only material visual effect on the Church Group will be in medium distance views from part of Station Road and the appeal site (Appendix 1, Figures 52 and 53, and Appendix 2, Figures 12, 14 and 16). These views are primarily of the upper part of the tower and spire of the Church, rather than of the Church Group as a whole. Therefore, the visual effect of the appeal proposal on the Church as a whole is small, and the effect on the Church Group is smaller still. In order to suggest that the appeal proposal might have some abstract effect on the significance of other listed buildings in the same group, most of which are visually unaffected, one would have to go through an abstract mental exercise in which one effect had some sort of domino impact on another – all of them emanating, ultimately, from the change to the view of the Church spire specifically from the appeal site and parts of Station Road. I do not say that this is philosophically impossible as a matter of principle, but in this particular instance I do not think that the consequential effects on the Church Group as a whole (particularly on examples such as The College, The Guest House, and the three listed tombs in the churchyard, to name but some of the assets) are in any way significant. On the contrary, they are negligible at most. It is for that reason that I said in my Heritage Impact Assessment in Appendix 2 (as summarised in paragraph 2.1 above) that it is important not to exaggerate the effect on the Church Group as a whole.

- 2.12** Specific issues have arisen in respect of views from the upper windows of Pollard House/Cottage and Church House (see Chapter 4 below). It has not been possible to see the view from Church House, but I was able to see the view from the upper window of Pollard House (Appendix 1, Figure 81) on 7 July 2023. In my opinion, the view towards the appeal site from the upper window of Pollard House is not significantly different from the view from ground level, and is largely taken up by The Star Inn. I cannot accept that this view is material to the significance of Pollard House, or that the very small change that would be brought about by the implementation of the appeal scheme would in any way harm or reduce the significance of Pollard House.
- 2.13** Regarding Church House, I have already stated (in the analysis of the individual listed buildings under paragraph 2.7 above) that the appeal site is visually and physically separated from this listed building by the 20th century pub known as The Star Inn, and it makes almost no contribution to the significance of the listed building. Therefore, any visibility of the appeal site from the windows of Church House (which I would estimate to be restricted) is not material to the significance of the building. Views from the first floor windows and dormer windows would not have been historically significant to the guests and servants using the building when it was an inn. It is inconceivable that any part of the appeal site was ever optimised for the enjoyment of views from Church House.

THE NEW PLACE GROUP

- 2.14** All the significance physically embodied in New Place (Appendix 1, Figures 35 to 19, and in Appendix 2, Figures 4 to 7) will remain intact. As I have said above, the physical fabric of the building makes up a very large part of its significance, so a very large element of the significance of the designated heritage asset will be unaffected by the appeal proposal.
- 2.15** In a similar vein, all the significance physically embodied in the New Place Group will remain intact, because there will be no physical change to any of the three listed buildings in that group. The vast majority of the significance of the New Place Group will be preserved unaffected
- 2.16** It seems to me that the listed building known as The Old Cottage is so visually and spatially remote from the appeal site, and so historically distinct from New Place,

that there will be no effect on the significance of that building. To suggest that there would be an effect on its significance arising out of some consequential effect arising from a visual change within the setting of New Place would be tenuous, to say the least.

2.17 I was able to visit New Place on 7 July in order to undertake a detailed analysis of the way in which the grade II* listed building relates to its gardens and to the appeal site. The results are contained in Appendix 1, Figures 67 to 80, within which I examine views from five windows on the first and second floors, and views from within the gardens. The appeal site is almost completely unseen from the windows and gardens in the summer months, and there are only glimpsed views of The Star Inn and the tip of the Church spire from some of the windows. Essentially, the exercise demonstrated that New Place and the New Place Group is protected by an Inner Garden and an Outer Garden that were designed to keep it separate from the appeal site, and which have been planted and landscaped in such a way as to be as private as possible.

Key views of the Church and New Place

2.18 As a prelude to this discussion, my own view is that a truly “key” view of a heritage asset is one that goes to the significance of the structure in question. In other words, it is a view that is important to the appreciation of the asset, and that would cause a material reduction in significance if it were to be lost or badly affected.

2.19 To date, the two main professional consultees who have commented on application TA/2022/685 have not systematically analysed key views of the Church or New Place. Historic England’s letter of 7 May 2023 [CD 1.2], on which I say more below, says that key views of the Church will be affected by the appeal proposal, but it does not say how many other key views will not be affected. The comments of Surrey County Council’s Heritage Officer,¹² on which I say more below, say something similar, although they allude to a number of other views that might be affected. However, I have seen no detailed analysis of all the key views of the main listed buildings from these parties.

¹² Dated 10 August 2022, and 15 February 2023, as set out in the delegated report dated 21 April 2023 [CD 2.1].

2.20 I now turn to the key views of the Church and New Place, from which their significance is best appreciated, at least from a public perspective.

KEY VIEWS OF THE CHURCH

2.21 My own view is that key views of the Church are contained in Figures 7 to 12, and 19, in Appendix 1. Similar key views can be obtained from viewpoints within the immediate vicinity of the locations in question.

2.22 I would not describe the other views of the Church and its spire, as contained in my Appendix 1, as being as “key” to the significance of the listed building as those views identified above. Many of them are incidental, in the sense that they arise as glimpses between buildings, depending very much on the alignment of the roads and paths and spaces in question, and the choice of viewpoint. Some may be described as interesting views, or contextually pleasant views, but they are not necessarily key to the significance of the Church itself.

2.23 As far as views of the Church spire from the appeal site are concerned, they cover a range of distance, from about 150m to about 550m.¹³ In my opinion, they are not “key” to the significance of the Church such that they need to be preserved wholly unchanged. With this in mind, it is relevant that new public views of the spire will be opened up by the appeal proposal. I accepted, in the conclusion of my Heritage Impact Assessment (Appendix 2), that views of the Church from the appeal site will be reduced (which is harmful) but they will also be channelled and given new meaning (which is beneficial). The Sketch Vignette submitted with the application gives an idea of how new structural relationships can be created (Appendix 1, Figure 59). Some of these new views will probably not be dissimilar in character to existing views from the Baker’s Lane area, or Saxby’s Lane, or Church Road, examples of which can be seen in Appendix 1, Figures 26 to 28, and 33 and 34. Indeed, some new public views of the Church spire from the north-western part of the site will be completely uninterrupted by new housing.

2.24 In summary, it is not a simple matter of stating that there are some “key” views that will be affected, and assuming that the matter ends there. There is the potential for new public views of the Church to be created, and these may acquire a

¹³ For context, see Appendix 2, Figure 20, which shows a view from Jenner’s Field recreation ground at a distance of about 240m – that is, about half the length of the view from the southern end of Station Road.

degree of significance in the future. I pass this over to Mr Evans for discussion on the question of public benefits in the balancing exercise.

2.25 I conclude my observations on key views of the Church by drawing attention to the important fact that none of the key views in Figures 7 to 12, and 19, in Appendix 1, will be in any way affected by the appeal proposal.

KEY VIEWS OF NEW PLACE

2.26 In my opinion key public views of New Place are from Station Road, as illustrated in Figures 36 and 37 in Appendix 1, and from nearby on the footpath (Figure 38). There are further views from near the station (Figure 35) and from a more distant point on the footpath (Figure 39), which do not strike me as being so “key” to the significance of the listed building as the three views first mentioned.

2.27 None of the key views of New Place identified above will be affected by the appeal proposal. The view in Figure 80 of Appendix 1 will not be affected by the appeal proposal. In short, the key components of the setting of New Place will not be affected by the appeal proposal.

2.28 There will be no significant reduction in views of New Place from the appeal site, which is to say that no public views will be affected, and the impact on privately available views will be small. In my opinion, this change will not reduce the heritage significance of New Place.

2.29 I am aware of a “semi-public” view of New Place from the beer garden of The Star Inn. It seems to me that any change in this view is very unlikely to reduce the significance of the listed building to any material degree. It is not a point that has been specifically made by Surrey County Council’s Heritage Adviser, or by Historic England.

Rural and original aspects of setting

2.30 Historic England’s letter of 7 May 2023 [CD 1.2] says that the listed buildings have a “rural” setting, and this is reflected in the comments of Surrey County Council’s Heritage Officer.¹⁴ I say more about these consultations in Chapter 4 of my proof,

¹⁴ Dated 10 August 2022, and 15 February 2023, as set out in the delegated report dated 21 April 2023 [CD 2.1].

but for the present I will concentrate on the extent to which there really is a rural setting. I will also consider whether the appeal proposal might sever the last link between the listed buildings and their original settings.¹⁵ To preface the discussion, I take it to be generally accepted that the “original” (say, pre-19th century) setting would have been much more rural than it is today.

2.31 Again, I deal first with rural aspects of the setting of the Church, and then with New Place.

THE CHURCH: RURAL/ORIGINAL SETTING

2.32 In my opinion, the most original, most tranquil, most atmospheric, most contextually rich, and most significant part of the surroundings of the Church are to be found in and immediately adjacent to its churchyard. It is here that the essence of the building is at its most concentrated.¹⁶ It is here that the ancient communal heart of the settlement exercises its most powerful influence, and it is here that the best relationships with the other listed buildings in the group are experienced - The Guest House, The College, and Old Town House.

2.33 If the churchyard is a bubble, or time-capsule, in which the rural characteristics of its setting of the Church are still at their strongest, it has to be said that the original pre-19th century surroundings have been radically changed and modified in a number of respects to the north, west and south. College Close, to the west, has suburban characteristics, and to the west of College Close is Lingfield Primary School, and then Vicarage Road, and then Headland Way – an area of suburban development extending continuously due west from the churchyard boundary to a depth of more than 350m. To the north, there are suburban characteristics in Vicarage Road, extending several hundred metres along Saxby’s Lane, including a whole estate to the east of Saxby’s Lane; these are relieved, to some extent, by the open space in the recreation ground known as Jenner’s Field (Appendix 1, Figure 20). To the south, the “bubble” to which I have alluded includes Church House and Pollard House/Cottage, but it then gives way to more modern suburban-style development in Church Road, and along the east-west route of the B2028, and

¹⁵ This is relevant to guidance in GPA3, page 4, under “Cumulative change” – CD 8.1

¹⁶ Figures 7 to 19 (particularly Figures 9 and 17), in Appendix 2, could reasonably be described as being photographs taken in and around a country (i.e. rural) churchyard.

southward into Camden Road and Talbot Road – a continuous development of houses and roads at least 270m deep.

2.34 The eastern side of the setting of the Church is more rural, and more original, than the setting to the north, west and south described in the last paragraph. One of the reasons for this is that the churchyard extension was placed on the east side of the Church, pushing some of the “country churchyard” characteristics nearly 200m due eastward from the Church than was originally the case. This provides a permanently protected buffer zone, which is unique to the eastern side of the Church.

2.35 Insofar as Star Fields, to the south-east of the Church, have rural characteristics, I provide more detail about this aspect below, under the subject of the conservation area (Chapter 3). For present purposes, I would describe the rural characteristics of Star Fields as being physically detached from the Church, in the sense of being separated from it by the 20th century pub known as The Star Inn, which I understand to have replaced an earlier Star Inn, which was in what is now Church House and Star Inn Cottages.¹⁷ I would also describe the rural characteristics of Star Fields as being less intense, for the purposes of experiencing the significance of the Church, than the stronger rural characteristics of the churchyard. They could perhaps be better described as having residual agricultural characteristics, While the response to that may be that even a commonplace rural or agricultural view might still be of heritage value and sensitivity, I go into more detail below (in Chapter 4, in respect of the conservation area) about the relatively poor state of preservation of Star Fields, in archaeological and heritage terms.

2.36 In summary, the rural dimension of the setting of the Church has been suburbanised to the north, west and south, but it has been extended to the east, where it survives well in the churchyard extension. That part of the rural setting to the south-east, in Star Fields, is relatively detached and relatively eroded, and it plays little part in making the Church a significant building. For this reason, it is a

¹⁷ As an aside, I note that the fields seem to have taken their identity from the inn, rather than from the Church. The name “Star Field” has been used for at least 140 years, as is attested by a report in the Sutton Journal of 1 August 1882, when the Juvenile Oddfellows of the Earl of Cottenham Lodge dined at the Star in Lingfield and “afterwards adjourned to the Star field, where a number of sports had been provided...”. It is not clear to me whether “Star field”, as it was understood in 1882, extended all the way to Station Road and the B2028. Indeed, it seems possible that it was actually associated with Star Farm, most of which was to the north of the appeal site, as shown in Appendix 1, Figure 60.

part of the setting of the Church that can absorb change without causing anything other than a low level of (less than substantial) harm to its significance.

NEW PLACE: RURAL/ORIGINAL SETTING

2.37 I have already noted that New Place would have begun to lose some aspects of its original rural setting in the 19th century with the opening of Lingfield railway station in 1884. The goods sidings associated with the station have been redeveloped as the station car park, and as the detached houses on the east side of Station Road – essentially, all the houses from numbers 105 to 149 Station Road. However, at its height, the railway would have constituted a noticeable area of industrial activity close¹⁸ to the north-east of New Place, as can be seen on the O.S. map of 1961 (Appendix 1, Figure 65). From the late 1950s to the late 1980s or early 1990s¹⁹ this included a “large banana ripening shed”, which received supplies from Avonmouth docks.²⁰ I understand that this commercial shed stood in the vicinity of 109 Station Road,²¹ within what would now be regarded as the setting of New Place.

2.38 The footpath link from Station Road to Church Road seems to have been created by pedestrians arriving at the station and using it as a short cut – so it is relatively recent in origin, and it has connected the New Place Group of listed buildings to the Church Group of listed buildings in a way that must have altered the character of the original rural setting of New Place. Instead of being isolated, it became connected. The present line of the footpath is not shown on the tithe map (Appendix 1, Figure 60), or on the auction plan of 1873 (Appendix 4, internal page 17). In 1873 the path from Church Road ended at the pond, about a third of the way along the present footpath, as one travels east. It did not go all the way to Station Road. Rather than the footpath being an ancient link between New Place and Church Town, it is a relatively modern construction, and I sense that New Place has relied on the buttressed stone wall on the northern boundary (Appendix 1, Figure 38) as a means of retaining a degree of privacy ever since the 1880s.

2.39 In the 20th century the conversion of the farm buildings at New Place Farm would have further changed the setting and character of New Place, and there has been

¹⁸ Much closer than the appeal site.

¹⁹ I understand that the shed stood until the late 1980s or early 1990s – Lord Lingfield, pers. comm.

²⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lingfield_railway_station

²¹ Lord Lingfield, pers. comm.

development and conversion (e.g. Cyder Barn²²) elsewhere along Station Road. My own assessment is that the development of Star Fields, to the rear of New Place, will not cause anything more than a low level of harm to its significance, as I have previously described. The visual relationship between the Inner Garden of New Place and the Oast House, as seen in Appendix 1, Figure 78, will not be affected. It is possible that the view of the Oast House from the ensuite bathroom of New Place, as illustrated in Figure 75 of Appendix 1, might be slightly affected, but that view is not material to the significance of New Place or to New Place Farm.

Views from the windows of Church House and Pollard House

2.40 I have already alluded to the possibility of a change in view from the first floor windows of Pollard House and Church House, and this is also mentioned in Chapter 4. I was able to see the view from Pollard House on 7 July 2023, but access to Church House was not possible. The view in question is illustrated in Figure 81 of Appendix 1. In my opinion, the view is not material to the significance of Pollard House, and the proposed change in that view (which will be very small) will not harm or reduce the significance of Pollard House. I have addressed the views from Church House in paragraph 2.13 above, concluding that the view in question is not material to the significance of that listed building.

New Place Farm and Cyder Barn

2.41 The locally listed buildings (non-designated heritage assets) are identified in Appendix 1, Figure 4. There are illustrations in Appendix 4, internal pages 41 and 42.

2.42 It seems to me that the locally listed buildings are of relatively low heritage significance compared with those listed buildings and the conservation area (i.e. the designated heritage assets) which are subject to statutory duties and the provisions of paragraph 199 of the NPPF which indicate that great weight should be given to the conservation of a designated heritage asset when considering applications that affect its significance, irrespective of how substantial or otherwise that harm might be.

²² Appendix 1, Figures 4 and 58.

- 2.43** Contextually, it seems to me that the setting of the locally listed buildings is at its strongest to the north, where there is a historic relationship with New Place (Appendix 1, Figure 78²³). They were part of a farm, and their very existence was reliant on the principal building to the north. That is not to say that they have no connection with the appeal site, but it is right to say that the appeal site is not the only part of their setting.
- 2.44** The appeal proposal will have no physical effect on any locally listed buildings, so that aspect of their significance (i.e. their fabric, plan form and structure) will be completely preserved.
- 2.45** While I accept that the appeal site provides the locally listed buildings with an open setting to the south, and while I accept that views northward across those fields from the B2028 Town Hill (Appendix 1, Figure 51) will probably be entirely removed by the appeal proposal, not all views will be eradicated. The conical cowl of the converted Oast House is likely to remain visible – perhaps more publicly visible than it is now. Therefore, I accept that the change will be noticeable, but I consider the harm to the significance of the locally listed buildings will be low. The historic relationship with New Place to the north will be preserved.
- 2.46** My understanding is that there is agreement between the main parties that Cyder Barn is not affected by the appeal proposal, and that it can be scoped out of further discussion.

²³ Figure 75, which is from an ensuite bathroom window, does not express the historic relationship as strongly as the view in Figure 78).

3. Lingfield Conservation Area

Introduction

3.1 My assessment of impact on the significance of Lingfield Conservation Area is contained in paragraphs 4.6 to 4.8 of my Heritage Impact Assessment (Appendix 2), where I accepted that the proposal would result in a reduction in private open space within the conservation area. However, there would also be an increase in public access to Star Fields. A new road would connect with the smaller field to the north of the relatively recently created footpath, which is a field visually self-contained by hedges and existing development. I also acknowledged that there would be a significant (i.e. noticeable) effect on the setting of the conservation area, with specific reference to the reduction in view of the church spire. Overall, I concluded that there would be a medium level of less than substantial harm to the significance of the conservation area within the meaning in paragraph 202 of the NPPF.

3.2 For the avoidance of doubt, there were two strands to my assessment of impact on Lingfield conservation area. One was in terms of development within the area, formally engaging section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.²⁴ The other was in terms of development outside the conservation area, which was to do with the setting of the designated heritage asset, and the assessment under Historic England's advice in GPA3.²⁵ Although these two strands are technically separate, they tend to merge into one another for the purposes of the assessment of views north-westward from (say) the junction of Station Road and the B2028.

Development within the conservation area

3.3 My assessment of the conservation area was "as found". In other words, I accepted that the boundary had been drawn where it had been drawn, and I treated all the land within the conservation area boundary (including those parts of Star Fields that lay within the boundary) as being land of special architectural or

²⁴ See Chapter 2 of the Heritage Impact Assessment (Appendix 2).

²⁵ See pages 21 and 22 of Appendix 2.

historic interest.²⁶ Whatever the reason for drawing the boundary at that point, the simple fact was that a considerable part of Star Fields had been included in the conservation area.²⁷ Given that Star Fields would be subject to a significant change, I arrived at my conclusion of a medium level of less than substantial harm to the significance of the conservation area.

3.4 When advising on mitigation (see above, paragraph 1.13), I treated the abovementioned land as private open space that had been included within the conservation area boundary because the council considered it to have some heritage significance. However, it did not seem to me to be a particularly important open space in the sense of being a publicly accessible resource, or as a significant piece of townscape.²⁸ On the contrary, all the buildings on the periphery turned their backs on it. Nevertheless, the land was in the conservation area, and a high priority had to be given to minimising the impact of the development upon its character and appearance – particularly the area to the north-west, closest to the Church Group.

Development within the setting of the conservation area

3.5 With reference to Appendix 1, Figure 1, the setting (by which I mean the surroundings of the conservation area, external to its boundary) of that part of the conservation area relevant to this appeal is predominantly made up of residential suburban and educational uses, as follows:

- To the north are suburban-style developments in Vicarage Lane, Saxby's Lane, Baker's Lane, and New Place Gardens.
- To the west is Lingfield Primary School, with its playing fields, and with Vicarage Lane further to the west.

²⁶ As per the definition in section 69(1) of the Act. If I had not treated the land within the boundary as being part of a conservation area then I would obviously have been open to criticism.

²⁷ Having previously been involved in the designation of conservation areas, and having gone through the process of trying to decide where the boundaries should be, I am fully aware of the challenges and debates that can arise. I have had regard to paragraph 207 of the NPPF, which states that not all parts of a conservation area will necessarily contribute to its significance. It seems to me that an example of this would be a relatively small internal pocket of insignificant land within a relatively large conservation area. In a case such as Linfield Conservation Area, however, I accept that extending the boundary into Star Fields was deliberate. Whether it was done because the land in question was of intrinsic special interest (whether architectural or historic) is another matter.

²⁸ A local example of an important public open space would be Jenner's Field, to the north-west of Vicarage Road.

- To the south is development in Church Road, and along the B2028 Town Hill. There is also former agricultural land to the south, on the junction of the B2028 and Station Road (part of the appeal site). This former agricultural/rural land continues to the south-east of Station Road, extending between c.225m and c.430m from the conservation area boundary, as far as the railway, and taking on both sides of Eden Brook. It is now public land, part of Lingfield Park Resort.²⁹ I illustrate the view to the Church spire from the bridge over Eden Brook in Appendix 1, Figure 82.
- To the east there is suburban-style development along Station Road, beyond which is the railway and the railway station, and the station car park.

3.6

For present purposes, and with reference to Figures 1 and 66 in Appendix 1, it is that land on the corner of the B2028 and Station Road, south of the conservation area, that is here most relevant to the setting of the designated heritage asset. However, the interface between the setting and the asset is not particularly evident. By that, I mean that an observer at the southern end of Station Road (e.g. Appendix 1, Figure 53) would be hard pressed to estimate or describe the exact point at which the conservation area begins and ends, unless they had a map. At face value, this is a fallow agricultural area, with rural views³⁰ of the village, but it does not have a strong historical identity. It has been, at various times, Town Field, Star Fields, and part of New Place Farm - simply private³¹ agricultural land that has never been landscaped for the enjoyment of the nearest country residence, or fully integrated into the core of the village.

3.7

I have sought to highlight that part of the appeal proposal that is outside the conservation area (that is, within the surroundings, or setting, of the conservation area) in Figure 66 of Appendix 1. To a large extent, it is the outer layer of housing that is likely to have the greatest visual effect on views into the conservation area, whether from Station Road or from the B2028 Town Hill. This would be inevitable in almost any development of the appeal site.

²⁹ As is clearly evidenced by the sign over the footpath leading south from the railway station.

³⁰ The consultation responses from Historic England [CD 1.2] and Surrey County Council's Heritage Officer [CD 2.1] say as much – although the Heritage Officer also uses the expression “semi-rural”.

³¹ Prior to its post-medieval enclosure which effectively resulted in private ownership, it might well have been held on a more communal basis in which each strip (of the ridge and furrow) may have been allotted to a different person under an annual or similar rotating system.

Conclusion as to the effects on the conservation area

3.8 For the sake of clarity on the point, I have considered how much of the harm to the significance of the conservation area derives from the external effect on its setting, and how much derives from the internal effect on its character and appearance. In my opinion, the effect of the proposal on the setting (as highlighted in Figure 66 of Appendix 1) would, taken in isolation, only amount to a low level of less than substantial harm, within the meaning in paragraph 202 of the NPPF. As for the physical effect of the proposal on the internal part of the conservation area, taken in isolation, I would say that it just tipped upwards over the point where the low level of harm meets the medium level of harm. My overall conclusion of a medium level of less than substantial harm to the significance of the conservation area, as repeated in paragraph 3.1 above, takes into account both assessments – that is to say, the physical effect within the conservation area, and the external effect on its setting. Therefore, it is the combination of those two effects, taken together, that tip my assessment into the medium level of less than substantial harm – albeit at the lower end of medium, rather than at the upper end.

Conservation area appraisal

3.9 Since compiling my Heritage Impact Assessment, I have been made aware that Lingfield Parish Council, in association with Surrey County Council, is promoting the appraisal of Lingfield Conservation Area, including a boundary review. Given that the question has been asked, it is relevant and legitimate to provide further evidence to the inquiry as to the actual heritage significance of Star Fields, and whether they should be included within the conservation area at all.

3.10 The tithe map of c.1845 shows five named land parcels to the north of Town Hill, all of which were in use for arable, pasture and orchards (Appendix 1, Figure 60). One of those parcels was called Town Field, which may be a throwback to the medieval period when all five parcels would probably have been part of an “open field” system. As I have already pointed out, the name Town Field appears to have disappeared altogether, over time.

3.11 The Surrey Interactive Map indicates that the historic land use was a field pattern described as “Scattered settlement with paddocks (post-1811 & pre-1940 extent)”

(Appendix 1, Figure 61). No particular heritage significance derives from land described in this way.

3.12 During my first site visit (19 January 2022) I observed eroded earthworks on the appeal site which were consistent with the remains of medieval ridge and furrow cultivation.³² As part of the archaeological evaluation of the appeal site, officers of Surrey County Council requested that a UAS RGB photogrammetry survey of the earthworks be carried out in advance of the determination of the planning application. This was managed by my colleagues in HCUK Group’s archaeology team, and the resultant report is provided in full at Appendix 3.³³ The conclusion of the survey was as follows:

“The UAS landscape survey conducted at Lingfield, Surrey, has successfully produced a detailed visual record of the pre-development landscape. A series of denuded ridge and furrow earthworks were recorded in the eastern and northern parts of the site. Modern mechanical ploughing was also noted within a no longer extant field parcel that was defined in the data as micro-topographical earthworks. Further relict field boundaries, that are depicted on historic mapping, were also noted.”

3.13 The above quotation confirms that, archaeologically, the appeal site contains nothing other than very eroded ridge and furrow, which is not a sufficient basis on which to include any part of it within a conservation area.

3.14 The hedge line crossing the appeal site from east to west clearly postdates the abandonment of the open field system,³⁴ as can be seen by the way it cuts through the ridge and furrow (Figure 10 of Appendix 3).

3.15 The straight hedge line running north-west from Station Road, about half way between the B2028 and the grounds of Heatherwell House, does not appear on the tithe map (Appendix 1, Figure 60) and is modern in origin.

³² Which would have been created within an unenclosed or “open field” system, without the hedges and boundaries we now associate with “fields”.

³³ I have also included the geophysical survey by Pre-Construct Geophysics in Appendix 3. It had equally negative results, concluding that the archaeological potential of the site was low.

³⁴ The exact date when open field systems went out of use is difficult to determine, and varied from one place to another. My guess is that the field pattern seen on the tithe map in Appendix 1, Figure 60, was probably overlaid on the earlier ridge and furrow in the Tudor, Stuart or early Georgian periods, possibly in more than one phase.

- 3.16** My own assessment of the evidence, taken as a whole, is that the appeal site contains the very eroded ridge and furrow earthworks of a medieval open field system, overlaid with what are, for the most part, post-medieval and modern field boundaries.
- 3.17** I am not aware of any particular archaeological characteristics that would lead me to suppose that Star Fields are of special architectural or historic interest. The land is typical of the edges of many villages where open field systems have been absorbed into post-medieval enclosed field systems. In this case the ridge and furrow is particularly eroded, to a point where it would not be possible to make a case for preservation.
- 3.18** Taking the above evidence as a whole, I would say that there is no compelling reason to include Star Fields within Lingfield Conservation Area when the review of that area takes place. Had the ridge and furrow earthworks been sufficiently well preserved to be visually appreciable,³⁵ and if the earthworks of a hypothetical “shrunk medieval village” or SMV had existed (they do not, and there is no evidence of any settlement remains here) then I might have been persuaded otherwise. However, Star Fields are too eroded to be regarded as fields of special architectural or historic interest within the definition in the Act.

³⁵ By which I mean instantly interpretable by anyone, rather than just about detectable by a specialist with more than four decades of experience.

4. Comments on consultations

Introduction

4.1 In this chapter I comment on the main consultations that led to the refusal of planning permission, and on the Statements of Case of the “Rule 6” parties. I begin with the comments of Historic England.

Comments on Historic England’s letter of 7 May 2023

4.2 The council’s statement of case indicates at paragraph 5.4 that English Heritage was consulted on the application, and raised concerns. I assume this is an error, and that was in fact Historic England that was consulted.³⁶ I have proceeded on the basis of that assumption by commenting on Historic England’s letter of 7 May 2023 [CD 1.2].

4.3 I note that Historic England does not appear to have been consulted on this matter until 17 April 2023, about ten months after application TA/2022/685 was validated. This leads me to the conclusion that the council was not in a hurry to seek the opinion of the national heritage body most relevant to consultations on the application in question.

4.4 Historic England’s letter references the Church of St Peter and St Paul, which is listed grade I, and it references New Place, which is listed grade II*. It makes no reference to Pollard House (listed grade I), or to The Guest House, or The College, or Old Town House and Old Town Cottage, or to Church House (all listed grade II*³⁷). On this basis, it appears that Historic England has no objection to the proposed development in respect of effects on the setting of the latter buildings.

4.5 In my view, one of the most interesting passages in Historic England’s letter is this:
“The tranquil character of the churchyard would also be altered by building dwellings with associated access road directly to its south.”

³⁶ Paragraph 8.9 of the council’s Statement of Case infers that it is an error.

³⁷ Historic England is not formally limited to commenting on effects on grade I and II* listed buildings, but it is consulted specifically on applications affecting highly graded assets of this general quality.

4.6

The above passage clearly relates to the churchyard extension³⁸ on the east side of Church Road, because the appeal site is described as being to the “south”. Two points flow from this:

1. There does not appear to be any suggestion that the tranquil character of the original churchyard, on the west side of Church Road, will be altered. This will, in any event, be apparent to the Inspector from site observation, and from the photographic material in my Appendix 1, Figures 7 to 19. Therefore, the tranquillity of the most important space connected with the Church will not be affected.
2. It is not correct to suggest that there will be any new dwellings “directly to the south” of the churchyard extension. For one thing, there is a continuous buffer of land (including trees and two ponds), some 40m deep “directly” to the south and south-east of the churchyard extension. For another, the nearest new dwellings will be about 90m to the east, and about 100m to the south-east, of the position from which I took the photograph in Appendix 1, Figure 19. Had those houses already been in existence at the time I took the photograph, they would have been behind me, and over my left shoulder, beyond the trees. Indeed, they would have been further from me than the existing houses that stand between Church Cottage and the Clinic on the south side of Baker’s Lane. Given that my experience of the tranquillity of the churchyard was not disturbed or troubled by those buildings that were actually in existence at the time of my visit, I see no reason to suppose that the proposed new dwellings on the appeal site will make any difference at all. In short, this part of Historic England’s analysis is simply not credible or capable of substantiation.

4.7

There is another passage in the letter which casts further doubt on Historic England’s grasp of the spatial characteristics of the appeal site and its surroundings:

“Though proposals include some landscaping strategies to reduce this impact to some extent, views towards the church spire from the west side of Station Road and New Place across the proposed site would still be compromised.”

³⁸ Described in the Parish Council’s Statement of Case as the “Lower Churchyard”.

- 4.8** There is, of course, a thick hedge along most of the west side of Station Road, between the house known as Heatherwell and the junction with the B2028. This hedge makes it almost impossible to see anything to the west, at least during the summer months, especially when standing on the west side of Station Road - where there is, in fact, no footpath, and where there is significant danger for pedestrians. Even when standing safely on the footpath on the east side of Station Road on 19 May 2023, when I took the photographs that appear in Appendix 1, Figures 52 to 56, I was unable to see the church except at the southernmost end of Station Road, where the hedge thins out (Figures 52 and 53). This was only twelve days after the date of Historic England's letter, so the site conditions would have been similar in both assessments. With respect, I would suggest that my assessment is the more thorough and more credible of the two.³⁹
- 4.9** The passage quoted above also suggests that there is a view to the church spire from New Place, which will be affected by the appeal proposal. The Inspector will have to form a judgment on this, after undertaking the appropriate site visits, but it seems to me that that the photographs taken in the vicinity of New Place in Appendix 1, Figures 35 to 39, and in Appendix 2, Figures 4 to 7 (not one of which contains a view of the Church spire), indicate that Historic England has overstated the point. During my site visit on 7 July 2023 I was able to confirm that, during summer, there were no ground-level views of the Church spire from the Inner Garden or Outer Garden of New Place, and that the tip of the Church spire could only be seen from two upper windows (Windows B and D, as illustrated in Figures 69, 72 and 74 of Appendix 1).
- 4.10** Historic England's letter refers once to harm to "key views" towards the Church,⁴⁰ which is a matter I discuss above at paragraphs 2.20 to 2.24.
- 4.11** Although Historic England identifies harm to the significance of heritage assets, the latter part of the letter of 7 May 2023 opens up some doubt as to the real strength of the objection. Under the heading "Historic England's position" the author considers that the harm to the conservation area has not been minimised, and questions whether it is both justified and outweighed by public benefits. This

³⁹ It should be noted that the Google Street View images available for positions along Station Road are wholly unreliable for the purposes of assessing what a real pedestrian would see, because they are taken with a camera at an exaggerated height – essentially, a tripod fixed to the top of a vehicle. For the avoidance of doubt, all my own photographs were taken with an iPhone at eye height. I am 1.83m tall.

⁴⁰ Penultimate paragraph, on the penultimate page.

accepts the principle of development,⁴¹ a point that is reinforced in the next paragraph to do with a proposed reduction in density, and the proposed provision of “buffer zones”.⁴² The letter ends by saying that Historic England has “concerns”, which is a relatively mild way of putting it; and it says that many details need to be resolved, which is obvious from the fact that the application was in outline.

Comments on the heritage case for the council

4.12 I here address the comments of Surrey County Council’s Heritage Officer, dated 10 August 2022, and 15 February 2023, as set out in the delegated report dated 21 April 2023 [CD 2.1]. I have only responded to the substantive points that are made.

4.13 The first substantive comment by the Heritage Officer relates to Star Fields as separating the Church Group from the New Place Group:

“The openness of Star Fields reinforces the distinction between these two separate, but important, historical sites in Lingfield. I consider this to make a contribution to the special interest of the Conservation Area. It is a matter of fact that the fields are within the Conservation Area and have been so since 1972. Star Fields are located within the Church Town part of the Conservation Area.”

4.14 It is interesting that the officer assigns Star Fields to the Church Town “part” of the conservation area. I have already pointed out that the historical identity of the land has not been consistent over time. It has associations with Town Field,⁴³ and The Star Inn, and with New Place Farm. The land was not called “Church Fields”, to my knowledge.⁴⁴ As for the distinction between the two places (Church Town and New Place), this started to break down with the arrival of the railway in 1884, and with the short-cut footpath between the two, as I have described above.

4.15 The Heritage Officer develops the points about separation and openness by turning to the Church Group as follows:

⁴¹ Which is unsurprising, given that Historic England did not object to the draft allocation of the site.

⁴² As has already been mentioned, there is already a 40m buffer separating the churchyard extension from the edge of the appeal site.

⁴³ Which would appear to imply a topographical connection with Town Hill, to the south.

⁴⁴ Names like Churchfield, Eastfield, Westfield, and so on, are commonplace in towns and villages throughout the country, because they easily identified the large “open fields” that were used for cultivation in the medieval period.

"As a collective group their historic interest can be summarised as a small development based around the collegiate Church of St Peter and St Paul dating from the 15th to 17th centuries. Key aspects which reinforce this interest include the physical separation from other developed areas of Lingfield and views out toward Star Fields."

- 4.16** As far as the "separation from other developed parts of Lingfield" is concerned, I have already noted that there is continuous (not separate) suburban development to the north, west and south of the Church Group. There is physical separation to the east, in the form of the churchyard extension. To the south-east, the Inspector will see, from the site visit and from Figures 46 to 50 in Appendix 1, that these "views out" from the Church Group are largely blocked by a 20th century pub and car park. This seems to be accepted by the Heritage Officer, to some extent, as follows:

"While such views to Star Fields are limited by The Star Inn, the open nature of the field frames the background of the building and is a kinetic view as one moves north past the public house."

- 4.17** The abovementioned view appears in Appendix 1, Figure 46. In my opinion, it is not a significant or important view within the conservation area. Turning to the view in the opposite direction, the Heritage Officer comments that:

"While the Church Road group of listed buildings is visible across Star Fields, these are much less prominent owing to tree coverage and only Church House can be clearly identified owing to its windows on the first and attic floors."

- 4.18** This is a matter for the Inspector's site visit, but I think it fair to say that the vast majority of the Church Group cannot be seen from Star Fields because of the intervening building (The Star Inn) and trees. The Church spire, however, is more evident, as the Heritage Officer suggests:

"Much more clearly identifiable is the Grade I Church of St Peter and St Paul which is prominent in kinetic views along Station Road where it is framed by Star Fields. This forms an important part of its setting and enables Church Town to remain clearly identifiable from a distance as a distinct settlement."

- 4.19** The difficulty with this is that the Church spire is not as readily visible along Station Road as the Heritage Officer suggests. See the views in Appendix 1, Figures 52 to

56. The spire is only seen at the southern end of Station Road. For more “important” parts of the setting of the Church see Appendix 1, Figures 7 to 19. The Heritage Officer again seeks to make a point about the view of the spire from Station Road thus:

“The Design and Access Statement incorrectly shows this as being prominent in just one view point, but it is in fact continuous along much of Station Road. This view contributes to the building’s setting by not only revealing its rural setting but its importance as the centre of the Church Town area of Lingfield.”

4.20 As I have already pointed out, the experience described above is not “continuous” – for which see Appendix 1, Figures 52 to 56. The Heritage Officer then turns to views to and from New Place, as follows:

“However, there are clear views of Star Fields both to and from New Place which reveal its historic and architectural significance as a small country house.”

4.21 In response to the Heritage Officer’s suggestion, I have already pointed out that Star Fields were not landscaped in connection with New Place. The grounds and gardens of New Place were walled, and kept separate from the fields in agricultural use. Views to and from the building have not been optimised, save within the Inner Garden and Outer Garden of New Place itself. The building turned its back on Star Fields. I have seen no evidence to suggest that the connection between Star Fields and New Place ever went beyond common ownership (see Appendix 3, where the archaeological evidence is presented).

4.22 In respect of the locally listed buildings at New Place Farm, the Heritage Officer says:

“The final aspect is the impact on New Place Farm. The consultant has noted that the impact on this ‘would not be determinative in itself’. I am not sure of the meaning of this comment as my understanding is the impact of all heritage assets should be considered, even if they are only locally listed.”

4.23 To clarify the point, my comment indicated that, if this were the only issue, it would hardly be likely to be a reason for refusing the application. I am not suggesting that the heritage asset in question should not be considered, but, in my view, the significance and the sensitivity of the locally listed building, and its setting, has been overstated.

4.24 Lastly, the Heritage Officer seeks to make light of the opening up of new public views towards the Church from Star Fields:

"Owing to the topography of the site and the surrounding trees, I am not convinced there actually would be anything but glimpsed views of the church so can only afford this a small degree of benefit."

4.25 I am a little surprised by the Heritage Officer's position on this matter, since it is self-evident that the Church and the spire are by far the most visible buildings on the western skyline. Indeed, much has been said by the Heritage Officer and Historic England about views of the Church from as far away as Station Road. To then suggest that there is only a small degree of public benefit arising from the creation of new and potentially better public views of the Church, particularly in the north-western part of the appeal site, seems to contradict much of what has been said in respect of other effects. I leave the matter with Mr Evans, for the purposes of the overall balancing exercise, bearing in mind that to better reveal the significance of heritage assets is a well-established policy objective.

4.26 Please see Chapter 5 for a tabulated summary of the officer's position on harm, relative to other parties involved in this appeal.

Comments on the council's Statement of Case

4.27 The council's Statement of Case distils the comments of the Heritage Officer as they have been addressed above. I have the following further comments on the substantive points, which start with the council's assessment of the historic identity of the appeal site:

"A large part of the northern area of the appeal site is within the Lingfield Conservation Area being open fields and manorial land associated with the historic core of Lingfield Village which includes Grade I, II and II statutorily listed buildings and non-designated heritage assets."*

4.28 The above comment seems to reinforce the Heritage Officer's view that Star Fields are associated with the Church Group rather than the New Place Group. I have already discussed the identity of the land in question, and point out again that it was historically in the ownership of New Place.

4.29 The council's case then turns to the "isolated development" of the village:

"These fields contribute to the historic and architectural significance of the aforementioned heritage assets by revealing the isolated development of the village as a coherent medieval settlement, known historically as Church Town, which dates from the founding of Lingfield College in 1431."

4.30 I would say that is stretching the point to suggest that star Fields "reveal" the isolated development of the village – meaning the Church Group. That isolation has long since gone on the north, west and south sides, as I have already demonstrated. It is preserved on the east side by the churchyard extension. As for the south-eastern quadrant, any sense of isolation has already been interrupted by The Star Inn, dating from the 20th century. Modern development on the north side of the B2028 Town Hill, and on the west side of Station Road (Heatherwell House, reworked in the 20th century from a building said to have been constructed c.1887) has further affected the supposed "isolated development" of the original village.

4.31 The council's statement of case develops the theme of separation as follows:

"The application site provides an important separation between the village and surrounding modern development, being evident from views toward and from within Church Town."

4.32 The above part of the council's case is similar to the case made by the Heritage Officer. In response, I would say that that the appeal site is not evident in views from within Church Town, and it plays no role in the alleged separation between the village and surrounding modern development. I have already demonstrated that there is continuous suburban development to the north, west and south of the Church Group. The council's case then turns to rural character and New Place:

"The infilling of the fields with modern housing will remove the last vestige of the conservation area's rural character from its surroundings, including New Place. and cause harm to its character and appearance."

4.33 As an opening response to the above comment, I would suggest that it is inherent that any development on this site (which I understand to be a site that has been allocated for housing in an emerging local plan which has been submitted for examination) is bound to have some effect on the setting of heritage assets.

Turning more specifically to New Place,⁴⁵ I have already noted that the building faces Station Road, turning its back on Star Fields and the Church Group. To that extent, I do not consider the appeal development will affect the conservation area in the way that is suggested. As for the “surroundings”, of the conservation area within the appeal site, these are to the south, at the corner junction where the B2028 meets Station Road, about 130m to 210m south of New Place (Appendix 1, Figure 66). Insofar as this land will be affected, I accept that there will be a noticeable change within the setting of the conservation area. However, I have already drawn attention to the rural “bubble” of character in and immediately around the churchyard, so it is not entirely true to say that the last vestige of the conservation area’s rural character will be removed. The Council’s case continues as follows:

“Further harm would also be evident from the loss of the rural surroundings to New Place Farm, which is an undesignated heritage asset located within the Conservation Area. It is considered this would result in a high degree of less than substantial harm.”

4.34 For the reasons stated above, my position is that the significance and sensitivity of New Place Farm has been overstated. As a point of detail, there is no provision in paragraph 203 of the NPPF for the categorisation of harm into “substantial” or “less than substantial”, when dealing with non-designated heritage assets.

4.35 The council’s case continues with what I regard as a rather overstated assessment of views of the Church from Station Road:

“The church forms a prominent landmark when travelling along Station Road with views framed by the open rural fields. The scheme will see the loss of these rural views and the ability to understand its historic interest as an incredibly grand perpendicular Gothic church set amongst an isolated settlement built on a much smaller rural scale.”

4.36 The above ground has been covered before, but I again refer the Inspector to Appendix 1, Figures 52 to 55, which demonstrate that the views in question are not

⁴⁵ New Place is within the conservation area, rather than within its surroundings.

as available as is suggested by the council. In order to truly appreciate the undeniable grandeur of the Church in any detail, one has to get rather closer to it.⁴⁶

4.37 Finally, the council's case mentions Pollard House and Church House:

"The Historic Building Officer has also identified harm to the setting of the Grade I listed Pollard Cottage and Grade II listed Church House, both of which are historically significant for forming part of the isolated rural settlement of Church Town. Both of these buildings have views of the application site which reinforces this important part of their significance. The same is also the case for New Place, a small scale Jacobean country house developed separately from Church Town amongst rural fields."*

4.38 I have already commented on the view from the upper window of Pollard House, which I was able to see on 7 July 2023 (Appendix 1, Figure 81). For the reasons I have already stated, I do not see how the heritage significance of Pollard House could be reduced by the slight change in view that would arise from the implementation of the appeal proposal.

Comments on the heritage case for Lingfield Parish Council

4.39 The Statement of Case of Lingfield Parish Council is not specific on the category or extent of harm to designated heritage assets, so I cannot comment further in detail. The principal heritage points seem to be made in paragraphs 5.2 to 5.4 of the document, as follows:

"5.2 The opinion of the Parish Council is that the proposed layout and delivery of housing does not outweigh the combined harms to the significance of the Heritage Assets and to their setting and considerable harm to the Conservation Area as a whole. The layout will destroy forever the views into and out of the village at a key historical location. The rural landscape viewed from the upstairs of a Grade I listed dwelling, from the days it was built in the 15th century, will be lost, as will the setting for the heritage assets of New Place. The Locally Listed converted farm buildings, including the distinctive oast at New Place Farm will only be visible from

⁴⁶ There are some Gothic churches and cathedrals (e.g. Salisbury, Lincoln, York, Canterbury, and Boston, to name some obvious examples) which interact with their surroundings in a dramatic and extensive way, and which demonstrate grandeur over considerable distances. The Church of St Peter and St Paul, Lingfield, is not in that category.

over a car park and with the new development right up to these buildings. This set of agricultural buildings have been very sensitively converted to retain their rural character, will suffer the greatest harm.

5.3 The heart of an unique and historic ancient rural settlement will be altered irreplaceably and in just one decision, the real significance of the setting of the Old Town and the Heritage Assets is hugely diminished. For the Grade 1 Listed humble butcher's shop with the context of the proximity of the fields that were there when it was built, its significance is not just damaged, it is destroyed.

5.4 The current open view in all directions from public rights of way will be changed to narrow views along residential streets and only one will have a single focal point, the church spire and that looks as if it will only be achieved from one place along Station Road. The view from Town Hill towards the east and New Place will be lost as will the view from the public footpath and the Star Inn towards New Place as it would be blocked from ground level by the intervening houses. The green belt at this location is particularly important, not just to preserve the settings of the Heritage Assets, but it also prevents the built form in Town Hill merging into Station Road. It would leave isolated pockets of green belt such as the Lower Churchyard and reduce the gap between Lingfield and Dormansland."

- 4.40** Most of these points have been addressed elsewhere in my evidence, and I do not propose to rebut every statement, but I note that it is the Parish Council's view that the greatest harm will be incurred in respect of New Place Farm. This is not a view that is shared by any other party to this appeal, as far as I am aware. Interestingly, the Parish Council says that the "narrow" view to the Church within the appeal proposal will only be achieved from one place along Station Road (presumably referring to the Sketch Vignette – Appendix 1, Figure 59). With this in mind, I would invite the Inspector to refer to also Figures 54 to 56 in Appendix 1, and to contemplate the current view, which is predominantly of a hedge.

Comments on the heritage case for Star Fields Action Group

- 4.41** My understanding is that paragraphs 4 and 5 of the Statement of Case for Star Fields Action Group ("STAG") say this:

"4. Star Fields is the setting for an important group of Grade I and Grade II listed buildings. These buildings surround the site and the views of them are of great*

value to local people. The buildings have a connected history that is demonstrated by their setting close to Star Fields.

5. Were development to be permitted on the site, the setting and the views of the buildings would be destroyed, doing permanent, irretrievable harm to the heritage of Lingfield. The damage to the heritage sites is not capable of meaningful mitigation and is not justified by the provision of housing that can be supplied elsewhere in Lingfield.”

4.42 I have covered most of this ground in my earlier observations, but my main comments are (1) the grade I and II* listed buildings do not “surround” the site, (2) the “connected history” with Star Fields is not as strong as is suggested by the Action Group, and (3) the “damage to the heritage sites” is generally overstated. The Action Group’s assessment is markedly in contrast with that of Historic England, which raises no issues with effects on highly graded heritage assets around the Church.

Policy DP20

4.43 Policy DP20 of the Tandridge Local Plan Part 2: Detailed Policies (2014) is reproduced in full in Figures 63 and 64, together with the supporting text. It is for my colleague Mr Evans to comment more fully on the public benefit aspect of this policy in terms of the overall balance (Part A1 of the policy). I note that no party to this inquiry has sought to suggest that there will be substantial harm to any designated heritage asset, so Part A2 of the policy would appear to be disengaged.

4.44 With respect to Parts B1 and B2 of the policy, I have sought to mitigate and minimise the effect of the proposed development, primarily by encouraging my client to make more public open space in the north-western part of the site (Appendix 2, paragraphs 4.12 and 4.13).

4.45 With respect to Part C of the policy, the desirability of preserving and enhancing Linfield Conservation Area through detailed design can be achieved by further applications dealing with Reserved Matters.

4.46 My colleagues in HCUK Group’s archaeology team have complied with Part D of the policy in respect of fulfilling the requirements of Surrey County Council on matters such as the earthwork survey in Appendix 3.

5. Summary

5.1

My assessments of significance and impact remain unchanged since I compiled my Heritage Impact Assessment in March 2022, as do my main conclusions, which are as set out in the last paragraph of Chapter 5 of that document as follows:

"The residual (post-mitigation) effect of the proposal would, on current evidence, be significant. Even though the application site itself is not demonstrably of intrinsic architectural or historic interest, the effect on open space within the conservation area, and on the setting of the conservation area, would be noticeable in terms of character and appearance. In overall terms, the effect of the proposal on the special interest of the designated heritage assets would be to erode their significance, causing less than substantial harm to that significance, within the category in paragraph 202 of the NPPF. The extent of harm would vary in each case. Using the tabular approach in Appendix 1, it would be medium in terms of the effect on the significance of the conservation area, through the reduction of private open space in Star Field, and the effect of new development within the setting of the conservation area on the west side of Station Road. It would be low in terms of the effect on views of the spire of the parish church, bearing in mind that many views would remain, and public access to Star Field would, in fact, be increased. It would be low, tending strongly towards negligible, in terms of the abstract effect on other listed buildings in the core group to the west of Church Road. It would also be low, tending strongly towards negligible, in terms of the largely abstract effect on the group of listed buildings at New Place. Insofar as there would be medium effects in respect of the conservation area, they would tend towards the lower end of that band rather than the higher end - which is to say that they would not be so serious as to be incapable of being outweighed by public benefit. The effects on the non-designated heritage assets would be a further consideration in the balancing exercise. There would be no material effect on the significance of Cyder Barn. The effect on the locally listed group at New Place Farm would not be determinative in itself, given that the principal effects and issues relate to the statutory considerations relating the conservation area and the grade I listed church."

5.2

I present a full visual appraisal of the listed buildings and the conservation area to the inquiry, with particular reference to the grade I listed Church of St Peter and St

Paul (Appendix 1). Although this has been rather laborious to compile, it is intended to dispel the suggestion (which might be inferred from some of the objections to the proposal) that Station Road and Star Fields are some of the most important places from which to appreciate the significance of the listed buildings and the conservation area. That is simply not the case.

5.3

The starting point for my analysis of the effect of the proposal on the setting of listed buildings is in paragraph 4.5 of my Heritage Impact Assessment (Appendix 2). In that paragraph I acknowledged that there will be significant effects on the setting of the Church, in that views of the spire on the skyline will be reduced when looking from Station Road and from the south-eastern part of the application site. However there will be no direct visual impact on views of other listed buildings in the core group to the west of Church Road. I also acknowledged that people who are familiar with Lingfield may feel that there will be some effect on the abstract appreciation of the group, insofar as the spire acts as its geographical marker – but that is not the same as an actual reduction in the significance of individual buildings or structures within the group. I noted that it would be difficult to suggest that the grade II listed Jewell, Hale and Shore tombs in the churchyard would become less significant as a result of the significant change in the view of the church spire when seen from Station Road and the south-eastern part of the application site. I concluded by saying that it is important not to exaggerate the harm to the significance of the group as a whole.

5.4

My assessment of impact on Lingfield Conservation Area is contained in paragraphs 4.6 to 4.8 of my Heritage Impact Assessment (Appendix 2), where I accepted that the proposal would result in a reduction in private open space within the conservation area. However, there would also be an increase in public access to Star Fields. A new road would connect with the smaller field to the north of the old footpath, which is visually self-contained by hedges and existing development. I also acknowledged that there would be a significant effect on the setting of the conservation area, with specific reference to the reduction in view of the church spire. Overall, I concluded that there would be a medium level of less than substantial harm to the significance of the conservation area within the meaning in paragraph 202 of the NPPF.

5.5

Historic England was not consulted on this matter until 17 April 2023 (CD 1.2). In my evidence I comment on the letter from Historic England dated 7 May 2023,

noting that it ends on a relatively mild note, suggesting a lowering in density in order to resolve matters. There are a number of inconsistencies in the letter, and I draw attention to some of the more obvious points.

5.6 In my main evidence I respond to the comments of Surrey County Council’s Heritage Officer, dated 10 August 2022, and 15 February 2023 (as set out in the delegated report dated 21 April 2023 – CD 2.1).

5.7 The Statements of Case of Lingfield Parish Council and Star Fields Action Group are not specific as to the category or extent of harm to designated heritage assets, but I have commented on their main points in my evidence.

5.8 My evidence addresses Policy DP20 of the Tandridge Local Plan Part 2: Detailed Policies (2014), which is reproduced in full in Appendix 1, Figures 63 and 64.

5.9 I have tabulated the main findings of the parties to this inquiry below, in respect of designated heritage assets (LSH = Less than substantial harm within the meaning in paragraph 202 of the NPPF). As far as the three professional commentators are concerned, there is agreement on the effects on the Church and New Place. Historic England and the appellant agree on the effects on the significance of the conservation area, but Tandridge Council states a high level of harm in respect of effects on the significance of the conservation area, and (uniquely) a low level of harm relating to Pollard House/Cottage and Church House.

	Conservation Area	Church	Pollard House/Cottage & Church House	New Place	Other
Edis	Medium LSH	Low LSH	Negligible LSH	Low LSH	Negligible
Tandridge	High LSH	Low LSH	Low	Low LSH	Not stated
Historic England	Middling LSH	Low LSH	Not stated	Low LSH	Not stated
Lingfield PC	Not stated	Not stated	Not stated	Not stated	Not stated
STAG	Not stated	Not stated	Not stated	Not stated	Not stated