



Historic England

Ms Virginia Johnson  
Epsom & Ewell Borough Council  
Town Hall  
The Parade  
Epsom  
Surrey  
KT18 5BY

Direct Dial: 0207 973 3655

Our ref: L01177310

18 March 2020

Dear Ms Johnson

**Arrangements for Handling Heritage Applications Direction 2015  
& T&CP (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015  
& Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990**

**WOODCOTE GROVE ASHLEY ROAD EPSOM SURREY KT18 5BW  
Application Nos 19/00998/LBA & 19/00999/FUL**

Thank you for your letters of 20 February 2020 regarding further information on the above applications for listed building consent and planning permission.

**Historic England Advice**

I am writing to give updated advice following receipt of an amended scheme for the redevelopment of Woodcote Grove and its environs. Since our advice of 10 October 2019 a number of changes have been made to the proposal and we offer the following observations to assist your Council in reaching a view on this proposal.

Historic England is content that the revised ground floor plan for Woodcote Grove, which largely retains the principal rooms in their historic form, reduces the harm to the significance of the grade II\* listed building and thus that the concern we raised in our letter of 10 October 2019 has been addressed.

Our letter of 10 October 2019 also raised concerns that the scale, massing and proximity of Block F would diminish the prominence of Woodcote Grove in key views of its principal and garden elevations, thus harming an appreciation that the mansion was designed as a high status building and the focal point of its landscaped setting. We therefore considered that block F would cause harm to the significance of the grade II\* listed building. To address this concern the scale of block F has been reduced by one storey with a set-back top storey and the central bays have been recessed. We conclude this reduces the prominence of Block F in key views of Woodcote Grove and thus also the harm to the grade II\* listed building.



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Harm to heritage significance has also be minimised by reducing the height of Block A meaning that the sense that Woodgrove Grove is a secluded building set within its own grounds beyond a high boundary wall, will be sustained to a greater degree.

Overall Historic England considers that the revised scheme is capable of meeting the requirements of Paragraph 190 to avoid or minimise harm to significance. Your Council will need to decide if the remaining harm, which we think is less than substantial, has clear and convincing justification as required by paragraph 194 before weighing it against the public benefits of the proposal in the manner described in paragraph 196.

In reaching a decision on this proposal we think your Council should also consider whether the design of new development meets the aspirations of paragraph 192 (c) which notes that Local Authorities should take account of the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. We also suggest your Council should consider whether the new development is sympathetic to local character and historic including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting as advocated by paragraph 127 (c).

If your Council is minded to approve this application, high quality materials and detailing will be important given the historic sensitivities of this site and we would recommend a number of conditions be imposed to control landscaping and building details and materials for both. We would be content to defer to the advice of your Conservation Officer for the wording of these conditions but would be pleased to offer advice if helpful.

### **Recommendation**

We consider that the applications meet the requirements of the NPPF, in particular paragraph numbers 190 and 194. In determining these applications you should bear in mind the statutory duty of sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess and section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

Your authority should take these representations into account in determining the applications. If there are any material changes to the proposals, or you would like further advice, please contact us. Please advise us of the decision in due course.

Yours sincerely



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