

# LOCK HOUSE, LOCK LANE, PARTRIDGE GREEN LANDSCAPE SITE APPRAISAL

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## **Introduction**

This Landscape site appraisal considers how Lock House can be converted into 4 residential units, maintaining the open parkland setting of the listed building, creating no new hardstanding, removing no hedgerow nor trees and yet creating private amenity gardens for the individual units.

## **Setting**

Lock House is a Grade II listed building sitting in a rural setting on a garden plot of 3.13 hectares.



*Image shows the existing landscape plan*

## **Historical Sensitivity and Preservation of Character**

The landscape proposal has been carefully designed to preserve and enhance the historic character of Lock House. The parkland setting, mature trees, and established garden features, many of which date back to the early 20th century, will be preserved and integrated into the individual garden spaces, ensuring that the overall sense of continuity and historical importance remains intact. By incorporating materials sympathetic to the property's historical

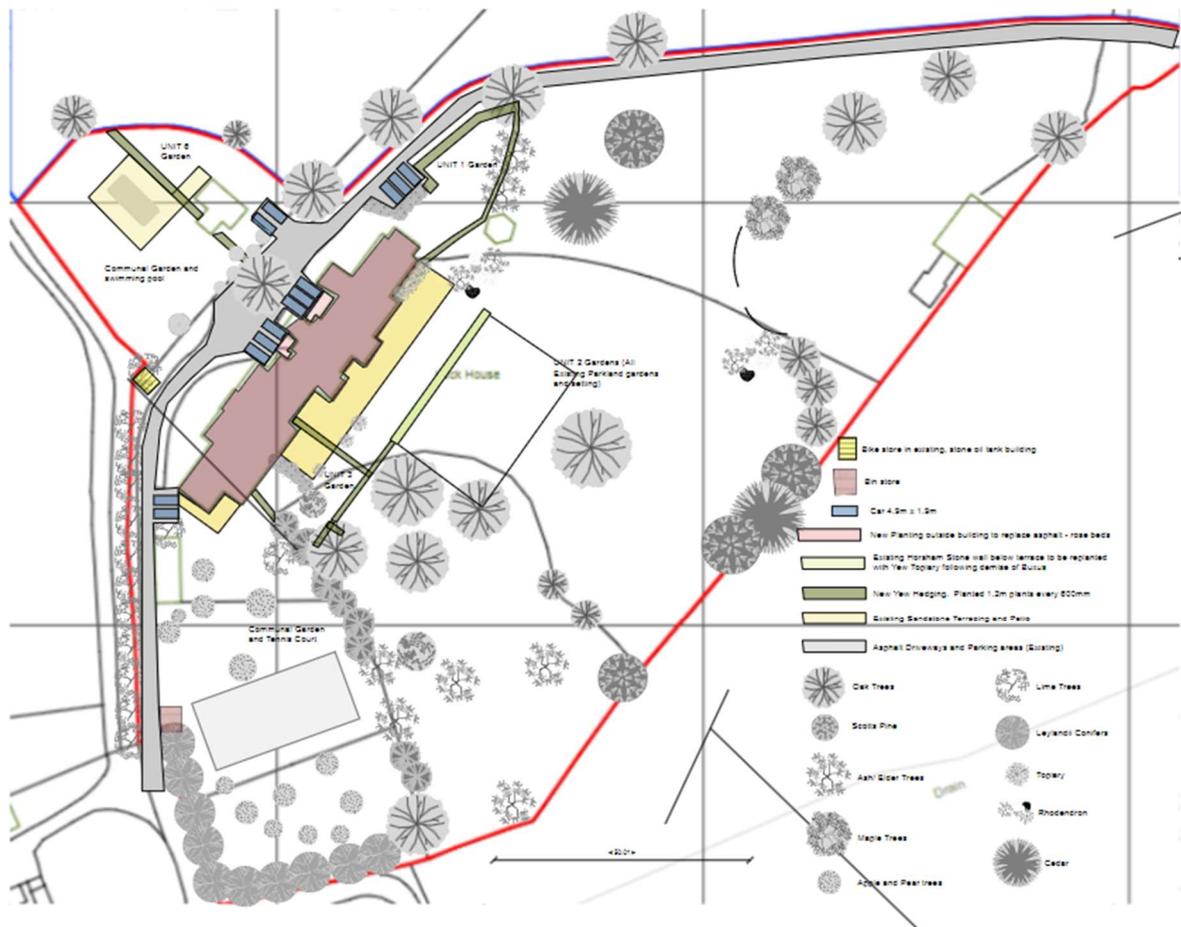
fabric, such as the existing Horsham stone walls, sandstone paving, and mature hedging, the proposed sub-division will blend seamlessly into the existing landscape.



*The garden to the east of the house (right in the panorama) features mature trees, including a mature cedar and Scots pine trees, along with a large mass of rhododendrons near the house. The trees, bushes, and orientation of the house conceal a lawned area.*

### **Visual Impact and Screening**

Visual impact has been a major consideration in developing the proposed gardens. The layout has been designed to minimise any potential adverse effects on the open, rural landscape or views from surrounding areas, including the historic bluebell woodlands and farmland. Mature trees such as the oak, cedar, and Scots pine, which are important features in the current landscape, will be retained to maintain the sense of privacy and natural screening. The new garden boundaries, defined by hedging such as Portuguese laurel, yew and Non-invasive rhododendron, will integrate seamlessly into the existing tree lines and wooded areas, ensuring the subdivision respects the rural context and does not appear overly formal or "urban."



*Image shows proposed landscape plan*

### **Sustainability and Ecological Enhancement**

The landscape plan also aims to enhance biodiversity and support local wildlife. The mature trees, including several ancient oaks and lime trees, provide important habitats for birds and small mammals, these trees are preserved and maintained during and after the subdivision process. Additionally, the introduction of native planting, such as Portuguese laurel, yew and non invasive rhododendron hedging, will further contribute to local biodiversity. The topiary Buxus, previously affected by blight, will be replaced with disease-resistant, climate-resilient species, promoting sustainability and longevity within the gardens.

### **Access and Circulation**

Access to Lock House remains via the existing driveway, which maintains its scenic quality as it winds through the bluebell woodland and lime tree avenue. The drive's historical significance is preserved, while practical solutions are introduced to ensure ease of access to the new residential units without altering the rural character of the landscape. The asphalted parking areas, currently expansive, will be reduced and screened with planting to create dedicated parking spaces for each unit, while minimising hardstanding and ensuring these areas remain well-screened by the mature trees and hedging.



### **Private Gardens and Amenity Spaces**

Each residential unit will be allocated a private garden designed to meet modern amenity needs while respecting the overall parkland character of the site. The layout avoids the use of urban features such as fencing or over-division that could detract from the historic setting. Instead, natural boundaries such as hedging and mature trees will be used to delineate spaces. For example, House 1 will benefit from a private garden area to the north-east, bounded by mature trees and laurel and yew hedging. This design approach ensures that the privacy needs of future occupants are met without compromising the aesthetic and historical value of the estate.

### **Addressing the 1970s Extension**

The 1970s extension, while an inherent part of the building's history, currently detracts from the overall aesthetic of Lock House. The proposed plans soften the visual impact of this extension by incorporating well-designed planting and strategic landscaping. Oak decking will be installed to create a more sympathetic interface with the natural surroundings accessed through new French doors in the flank elevation. Additionally, the proposed rose garden and mix of laurel and yew hedging will help to screen the extension from key viewpoints, further blending it into the historic landscape.

### **Planning and Heritage Policy Compliance**

The proposed landscape design and subdivision comply fully with relevant planning and heritage policies set out by Horsham Council, including those outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for listed buildings and historic environments. The design ensures that the significance of Lock House as a Grade II listed building is preserved and that any changes to the landscape are both sympathetic and proportionate, maintaining the balance between preserving heritage and accommodating modern living needs.

### **Garden Design and Privacy for Each Unit**

**House 1** – The proposed design meets the objective of providing a garden that fulfils an occupier's desire for privacy and outdoor amenity. The secluded decked terrace will offer a

generous space for relaxing, dining, and outdoor cooking, with direct sunlight available for most of the day. The garden's level lawns, bordered by mature trees, create a tranquil, private space while maintaining the aesthetic harmony of the parkland. Importantly, the design does not affect the setting of Lock House; the introduction of hedging alongside the drive serves to tidy and formalise the entrance approach without intruding on the listed building. The division hedging is positioned out of sight from the house, following a natural line between mature trees, further screening an area of the garden that is already physically and aesthetically separated.

From a heritage perspective, the garden layout for this house has been carefully designed to blend with the parkland setting, with no negative effect on the listed building.



*Image above shows existing rhododendron bushes which screen the garden in House 1 from the main parkland garden on its southern boundary*



*Image above shows existing fir tree standing beyond the summer house (remaining within the curtilage of House 2) forming the southern boundary of the garden in House 1*



*Image shows the garden of House 1, with the summer house and existing bushes providing screening from the parkland garden on the left*



*Image above shows the trunks of the oak and fir trees on the southern boundary of the garden in House 1, where new hedging will be introduced between to form the garden boundary*



*Image shows the line along the drive from the base of the oak tree to the parking area of House 1 along which new hedging to be planted to form the garden boundary*

**House 2** – This central section of the house enjoys the majority of Lock House's original gardens. No new garden separations are introduced, preserving the integrity of the landscape as viewed from within the house. As the parkland setting of Lock House is vested in this unit, its allocation ensures that no further subdivision occurs within the primary garden areas, thus maintaining the parkland feel and avoiding any potential harm to the listed building's setting. The summer house remains with this unit, and the existing parkland gardens flow seamlessly into the estate without any adverse impact on the historic landscape.



*The image above depicts the original parkland gardens, which remain unbroken and intact alongside House 2. In the top right corner of the picture, the existing summer house, rhododendron bushes, and fir tree create a natural boundary with the gardens of House 1*



*The image shows the view from the Morning Room at the centre of House 2. In the foreground, the top of the planting bed is visible on the Horsham stone wall that borders the flat lawn area, where football goals can be seen. A mature oak tree stands in the background, while the gardens rise from the flat lawn on the right, transitioning into woodland and additional lawns*

**House 3** – This section occupies the west portion of the house. The natural boundary of the garden follows the eastern edge of the property, running along the sandstone-paved area and gently descending towards the gardens to the line of the existing sandstone wall that bounds the lawn. The bottom garden boundary will be a line of hedge following the line of the existing wall to the existing hedging that screens the orchard. The 500 sqft existing sandstone terrace, which enjoys sunlight for much of the day, provides a private space for dining, lounging, and cooking, further shielded by yew hedging on one side and a 20-year-old mature evergreen hedge on the other. Topiary bushes of 2 metres in height will further screen the terrace, ensuring a secluded and serene environment. The private garden, is well-screened by mature trees and hedging, offering a level lawn. In heritage terms, the yew hedge at the boundary of the raised lawn provides a natural division between formal and informal gardens, creating a clear distinction without affecting views from the house. The hedge aligns with existing natural features being the existing stone wall, ensuring the design integrates seamlessly with the landscape, preserving the listed building's setting.



*Image above shows existing hedging*



*The division hedge for House 3 will run in line with the flower bed cut into the lawn, extending into a continuation of the hedge that follows the line of planting along the wall to the lawn*



*Further view of gardens of house 3*



*Terrace outside indoor swimming pool house 3*



*Terrace outside indoor swimming pool house 3*

**House 6** – Situated in the detached cottage and garage block, this unit will see the conversion of the garage into living space. The hardstanding to the east of the house will be transformed into a sandstone terrace, providing ample outdoor space for relaxation, dining, and entertaining. The house is set lower than the adjacent swimming pool, and the introduction of a laurel or yew hedge along the swimming pool's perimeter will create an effective visual screen, ensuring a sense of privacy for the cottage's occupants. From a heritage perspective, the transformation of the hardstanding into a landscaped terrace softens the otherwise urban nature of the space, contributing to a more cohesive and historically appropriate garden design.



### **Car Parking and Access**

The existing asphalt driveways and hardstanding areas provide ample space for car parking, meaning no additional hardstanding is required. Each residential unit will have allocated parking directly outside their respective front doors, utilising the existing layout without increasing the footprint of hard surfaces.

- **House 1** already has a parking area for three cars accessed off the main driveway and is well-screened by mature evergreen hedging.



- **House 2** will retain a parking area for three cars just east of the main entrance. A new 3-metre-deep rose garden will be created on either side of the entrance to soften the approach and reduce the institutional feel. The driveway will be realigned, pulling it away from the house and positioning passing cars beyond the mature oak tree, creating a more appealing, regularized parking area.



- **House 3** mirrors the arrangement of House 2, with a parking area for three cars west of the entrance and a similar rose garden to improve the aesthetic and reduce the visual impact of parked

cars.



- **House 6** already benefits from a large amount of asphalted hardstanding and a spur access road, which amply provides for its parking needs. The remainder of the hardstanding will be converted into a sandstone terrace as previously described, ensuring a more attractive and cohesive outdoor space for this unit.



**In Summary:** This thoughtful reconfiguration ensures that car parking is discreetly incorporated into the landscape, minimising its impact on the setting of the listed building and retaining the estate's overall parkland character.

### **Balancing Needs**

The landscape and garden design for the proposed subdivision of Lock House into six residential units has been carefully planned to balance the demands of modern living with the sensitivity required for a Grade II listed building. Car parking has been discreetly integrated to avoid compromising the property's visual integrity. By utilizing natural boundaries, existing mature trees, and sympathetic planting schemes, the design preserves the historic character of the site while providing private, usable garden spaces for each unit.

The division of the grounds is subtle, seamlessly blending into the existing landscape through the use of mature trees and yew hedging to define boundaries in a minimally intrusive way. The primary parkland setting remains with House 2, ensuring that the estate's historic character is preserved. By retaining the formal elements of both the house and gardens, House 2 continues to function as a grand, yet more manageable and practical residence, safeguarding the estate's historical value while allowing for its sustainable use.

This proposal respects the heritage significance of Lock House and its landscape, ensuring that the historical value is preserved while creating practical and appealing living spaces for future residents.

### **Residential Amenities and Landscape Integration**

The conversion of Lock House into six residential units has been carefully planned to accommodate the practical needs of modern living without negatively impacting the heritage or setting of the listed building. The following arrangements ensure that essential residential amenities are sensitively incorporated, maintaining the aesthetic and historical integrity of the estate:

- **Bin Store:** The existing practice for waste collection along Lock Lane results in a large number of wheelie bins cluttering the roadside on Monday mornings. To avoid this, a new oak bin store, featuring waney-edged oak cladding, will be discreetly located just inside the rear gates, as detailed in the proposed drawings. This centralised bin store will house all the units' bins, from which collections can be made directly each Monday. By keeping the bins out of sight and contained in one area, this solution removes the need for individual bins to be placed outside the homes, preserving the clean and unobstructed appearance of the estate.
- **Bike Store:** A covered bike store will be strategically positioned off the driveway, providing convenient access for residents while ensuring minimal visual impact on the landscape. The store will be sympathetically designed to blend with the surroundings, utilising materials and finishes in keeping with the character of the estate.
- **Post and Deliveries:** To manage postal deliveries and secure parcel drop-offs, a custom post box with a large parcel locker will be integrated into the bin store near the rear gates. This arrangement ensures that delivery drivers do not need to access the estate's drive, enhancing privacy and security for residents. With the locker's barcode-scanning system, deliveries can be confirmed electronically, reducing unnecessary trips and avoiding any disruption to the tranquil setting of the estate.
- **Estate Facilities:** Lock House's unique rural location also allows residents to enjoy direct access to local footpaths, connecting them to nearby attractions such as the Knepp Rewilding Project and the South Downs Link, as well as the wider countryside.
- **Fencing, Walls, Trampolines, and Washing Lines:** To maintain the visual harmony and character of the landscape, covenants within the long leases of each residential unit will explicitly forbid the installation of visually intrusive items such as fences, walls, trampolines, and washing lines. These restrictions ensure that the parkland setting remains uncluttered and continues to reflect the estate's historic charm.
- **Garden Sheds and Outbuildings:** The construction or placement of garden sheds, greenhouses, or other outbuildings will be restricted to prevent disruption to the visual integrity of the estate.

- **Permanent Outdoor Play Equipment:** The installation of permanent outdoor play equipment, such as large climbing frames or swing sets, will be prohibited to avoid detracting from the estate's formal garden aesthetic.
- **External Lighting:** Restrictions will apply to external lighting, ensuring any installations are discreet and do not introduce excessive light pollution, preserving the natural ambiance and views of the property, particularly at night.
- **Satellite Dishes and Solar Panels:** To protect the historic character of the estate, the installation of satellite dishes or solar panels on visible parts of the house or gardens will be strictly controlled or prohibited.

### **Conclusion**

The proposed landscape plan for Lock House successfully balances the need for private amenity spaces with the preservation of the estate's historic and architectural significance. The division of the grounds is subtle and carefully integrated into the existing landscape, using natural features such as mature trees and yew hedging to define boundaries in a minimally intrusive manner. The primary parkland setting of Lock House remains vested in House 2, ensuring that the historic character of the estate is preserved. In heritage terms, the overall approach causes no harm to the listed building or its surroundings and will ensure the house is preserved for the future.