



## HERITAGE STATEMENT

Demolition of existing 2no. dwellings and erection of 4no dwellings  
with associated parking, landscaping and alterations to the existing access

at

Threals Farm Cottages  
Threals Lane  
West Chilington  
West Sussex

**On Behalf of**  
Whiteoak Developments

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared to accompany a full planning application for the demolition of two semi-detached cottages at Threals Farm Cottages and their replacement with four new dwellings. The purpose of this Statement is to assess the heritage significance of the existing buildings and provide a clear justification for their demolition, in line with Paragraph 211 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024), which addresses non-designated heritage assets.
- 1.2 While the cottages have not been statutorily listed, nor are they located within a conservation area, it is acknowledged that the local authority has suggested the buildings may be considered non-designated heritage assets due to their age, vernacular form, and contribution to local character.

## 2 HERITAGE POLICY AND LEGISLATION

2.1 This section sets out the relevant heritage policies and legislation at national and local levels.

### **Legislation**

2.2 The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out the legislative background for proposals affecting heritage assets.

2.3 Section 66 of the 1990 Act states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

2.4 The Act does not make reference to non-designated heritage assets.

### **National Planning Policy Framework (2024)**

2.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2024) sets out the Government's planning policies for England, including policies for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.

2.6 Paragraph 214 states that when determining applications, local planning authorities should require applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance and sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on its significance.

2.7 Paragraph 217 states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take into account:

a) The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

b) The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities, including their economic vitality; and

c) The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

2.8 Paragraphs 219 and 220 confirm that great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, with greater weight given the more important the asset. Harm to, or loss of, significance of such assets requires clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of Grade II listed buildings should be exceptional, and to Grade I or II buildings should be wholly exceptional.

2.9 Paragraph 223 is relevant to non-designated heritage assets and states:

*“The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.”*

#### **National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)**

2.10 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) supplements the NPPF and provides further guidance on assessing significance and setting.

2.11 Paragraph 006 (Reference ID: 18a-006-20190723) of the PPG defines significance as:

*“The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic.”*

2.12 These interests include:

- Archaeological interest: Evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation.
- Architectural interest: Design, construction, craftsmanship, or decoration of buildings or structures.
- Artistic interest: Artistic representation or creative skill in design or craftsmanship.
- Historic interest: Association with past people, events, or social movements, including illustrative or associative value.

2.13 The PPG also confirms the NPPF's definition of setting as:

*"The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance, or may be neutral."*

### 3 SITE DESCRIPTION

3.1 Threals Farm Cottages comprise a pair of semi-detached dwellings, likely dating to the early-to-mid 19th century, constructed in a traditional rural style with pitched roofs and rendered elevations. There is no known architect of note, and the buildings do not feature in any national or local heritage registers. They are typical of modest agricultural workers' cottages and do not display unique architectural detailing or exceptional craftsmanship.



3.2 The site does not appear on the county Historic Environment Record as having archaeological interest, and no formal appraisal has ever been made that confers any official historic value.

## 4 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPACT

- 4.1 In determining the significance of these cottages, both architectural and historical aspects have been considered using Historic England's guidance on assessing significance (e.g. HEAN 12 and GPA2):

### Architectural Interest

- 4.2 The cottages are of modest vernacular construction and design, with no particularly noteworthy features or use of high-quality materials. The original form has been altered over time, particularly with rear extensions and internal adaptations.

### Historic Interest

- 4.3 While the cottages may reflect the rural development patterns of the 19th century, they are not directly associated with any notable historic events or individuals. Their construction appears to be part of wider minor residential expansion in the area, and they lack rarity or representativeness that would confer special historic value.

### Group Value and Setting

- 4.4 The cottages do not form part of a historic group and are now visually and physically disconnected from any historic farmstead context. The surrounding area has undergone significant modern development, including the Grange Park housing scheme and adjacent permissions, diluting any historic setting they may have once had.

### Condition and Viability

- 4.5 The buildings are in poor condition, requiring significant structural and energy-efficiency upgrades. Refurbishment is unlikely to be economically viable. Retaining them would result in substandard dwellings and prevent more sustainable and appropriate redevelopment of the site.

- 4.6 Paragraph 213 of the NPPF states:

*"In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgment will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset."*

- 4.7 In this case, the heritage significance is low, while the public benefits of redevelopment are considerable, including:

- Delivery of much-needed housing in an area with a documented housing shortfall.
- Replacement of inefficient and dilapidated buildings with high-quality, energy-efficient homes.
- A scheme that is sympathetic to the architectural vernacular of West Chilton and complements the local streetscape.

4.8 The proposal aligns with national policy objectives to make effective use of land, particularly where the existing structures are of limited value and the replacement enhances the area's character.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 While Threals Farm Cottages may exhibit some limited local interest, their significance as heritage assets is modest at best and insufficient to warrant preservation in isolation. The buildings are not listed, locally registered, or located within a conservation area. They are not exemplary of a specific architectural style or period and have been altered over time, reducing their integrity.
- 5.2 The proposal for their replacement responds positively to local character, reflects local vernacular, and delivers sustainable development in accordance with the NPPF. Taking a balanced view, the modest harm from the loss of these non-designated heritage assets is clearly outweighed by the public benefits of the proposed scheme.
- 5.3 Accordingly, the demolition of Threals Farm Cottages is considered justified and appropriate.