



Horsham  
District  
Council

## HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

<b>TO:</b>	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Lock House, Lock, Partridge Green
<b>DESCRIPTION:</b>	Conversion of a single dwelling into 3no. dwellings and conversion of the existing garage block with flat into single dwelling.
<b>REFERENCE:</b>	DC/25/0037 and DC/25/0038
<b>RECOMMENDATION:</b>	Application would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset at the lower end of the scale. As per paragraph 215 this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
<b>SUMMARY OF COMMENTS &amp; RECOMMENDATION:</b> See below	
<b>MAIN COMMENTS:</b> Lock House is situated to the west of Partridge Green. The property is set within generous grounds located primarily to the southeast. The property is accessed via a driveway which follows the eastern boundary (it formally passed through the central archway of Gatehouse Cottages), with a second access to the west close to Grants Farmhouse itself (grade 2 listed). Lock House is a grade 2 listed building, the main portion of which was constructed circa 1900 with further additions in the 1930's and then 1970's. The application seeks to convert the existing property into 3 dwellings following the refusal of an earlier application for 5 dwellings. The house would be subdivided with parking for each unit, a private patio area and wider shared grounds. A new front door would be required for unit 3. The justification for the conversion of the property relates to the lack of market demand for houses of this size, and the repair work that is required. Although the property is currently habitable it is understood that there is a need to replace the roof, replace windows, renew the heating system and replace the driveway as well as other works. Within the property there is evidence of water damage to some ceilings and externally some of the roofing tiles have failed. The house has been marketed by different agents over some years and rented out. It has been marketed as a single dwelling, and also rented as such. The property was converted into a single dwelling after having been occupied as a convent. As previously stated the optimum viable use for Lock House would be as a single dwelling. The property was built and designed as such, and the function and layout of its rooms supports its character as a large mansion house. As a single unit the grounds and outbuildings are utilised as a single entity without the additional demands of differing occupiers.	

The change of use of the property into 3 units would result in harm to the listed building. As noted in the Heritage Statement "elements of the floor plan, including surviving aspects of the master/servant hierarchy, are still evident." As identified in the previous response these elements provide an insight into the rigid class system that still remained in place during the first decades of the 20th century, and this would be diluted as part of the proposal. By subdividing the property into 3 units an appreciation of the hierarchy of spaces would be reduced because the ability to move through the building would be lost. This would prevent an opportunity to experience the contrast between polite rooms and service spaces. It is acknowledged however that the lessening of the number of units (from 5 previously) would enable larger areas of the property to be experienced within each individual unit and that the harm would be less than previously identified.

It is recognised that the subdivision of the property would in general echo the evolution of the building and the important interiors would be within one unit. However, as previously identified it is not just the physical separation of the property that needs to be considered. Consideration needs to be given to the impact on the appreciation of the property and primarily its architectural, artistic and historic significance.

The associated domestic paraphernalia of three units and the differing desires, and independence of the occupiers would blur an appreciation of the building as a pre war county house, although this level would be less than previously applied for. As a country house the property would have had an active staff in addition to family occupiers and there would have been a level of traffic and activity associated with this. Although as previously noted there is a danger that the level of activity, parking, and paraphernalia of daily living would result in the cohesiveness of the building as a single unit becoming eroded, it would be considered on balance that the proposed reduction in numbers would limit the pressure for incremental changes by individual occupiers.

If it is accepted that the retention of the property as a single unit cannot be realistically ensured, the subdivision of the property needs to be sensitive to the significance of the building and its use as a county house. On balance the subdivision into 3 units would be more conducive to the nature and character of the building enabling an appreciation of the building as a cohesive whole.

It would be considered that the optimum use of the property would be as a single dwelling which is why it would still be considered that the proposal would result in less than substantial harm (at the lower end of the scale) to the significance of the building. However the proposal should be balanced against the public benefit as per paragraph 215 of the NPPF. If it is accepted that the building can no longer be realistically occupied as a single dwelling house then there would be a public benefit in ensuring a viable future for the building. It would be suggested that the conversion into 3 dwellings would offer the opportunity of a viable future to the building whilst balancing the significance of the building.

No objection would be raised to the proposed works to the garage with flat above.

**ANY RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS:**

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<b>DATE:</b>	06.02.2025