

**Gerston Hall,
Greyfriars Lane, Storrington, RH20 4HE**
Heritage and Design statement

A. Description of property:

Description of house, outbuildings and landscape

B. Listing:

List Entry Summary

Grade:II

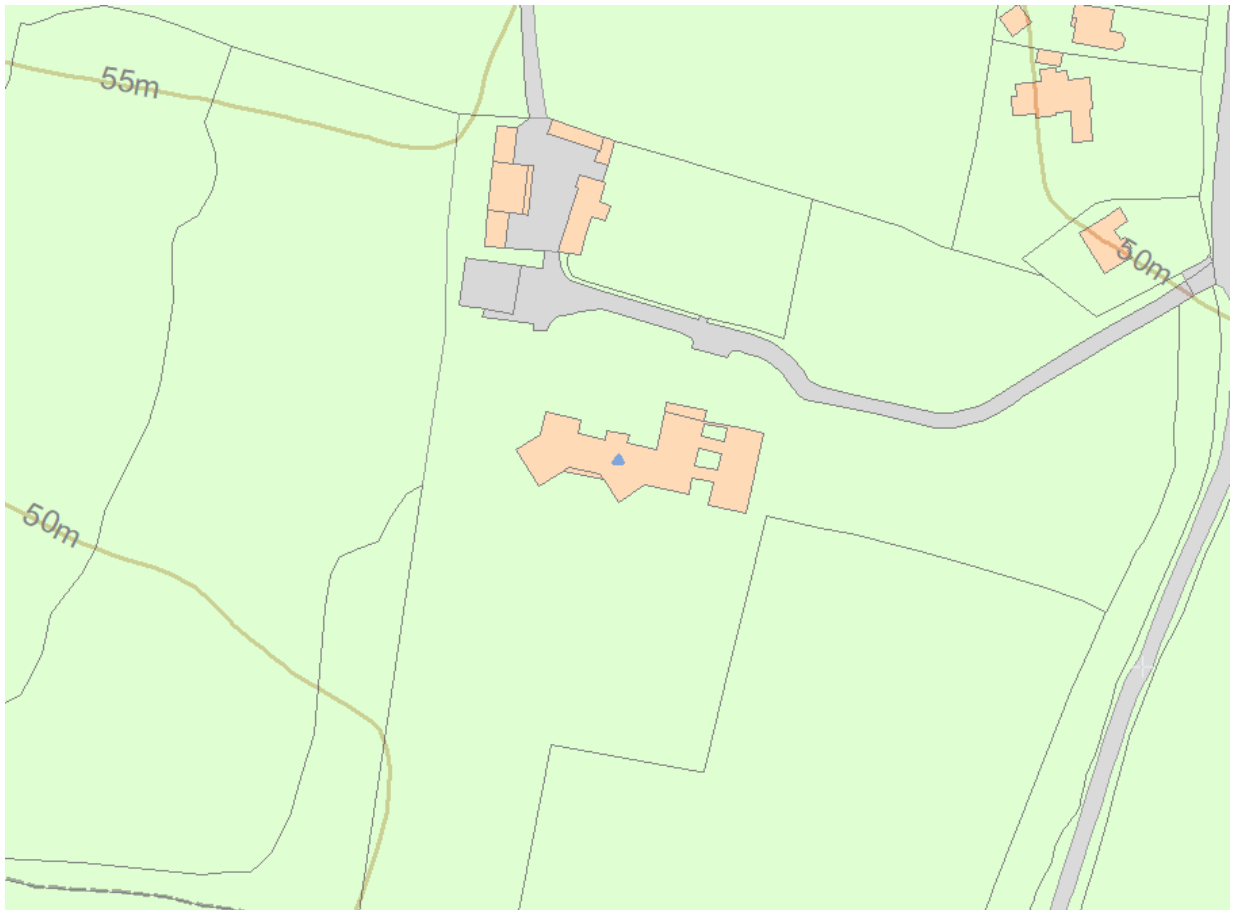
List Entry Number:1391342

Date first listed:06-Jan-2005

List Entry Name:Gerston Hall

Statutory Address 1:Gerston Hall, Greyfriars Lane, Storrington, RH20 4HE

(formerly known as St. Joseph's Hall)



C. Listed building description (English Heritage Listing):

Originally house, later occupied by a religious order and more recently as a bishop's house. Foundation stone laid in 1910 and house built for a Mr George Trotter. Architect not at present known but in the style of E S Prior. Vernacular Revival style house. Built of unknapped flint with knapped flint plinth, chalk dressings and reused Horsham stone slab roofs with flint chimneystacks. Modified butterfly plan with garden front facing south and north entrance front E-plan with projecting service wing and courtyard to the north east. Two storeys and attics with original mullioned or mullioned and transomed casements with leaded lights and original catches.

EXTERIOR: North or entrance front is of five bays which include central and right side gable and further projecting service wing to left. Large gable to right with bands of chalk and four-centred arched main entrance with linenfold panelled doors. Adjoining bay has a hipped dormer and an eight-light window to the first floor, pierced by two hipped dormers and a nine-light mullioned window to the ground floor. The central gable has a tall three tier three-light staircase window. The penultimate window bay is identical to the window on the other side of this gable. The service wing has three windows to the return and the front hipped roof, which has a paired dormer with five-lights, is supported on four Tuscan columns of flint, banded with chalk. Central service doorcase with plank door with ornamental ironwork. West elevation has a half-hipped roof with two dormers at separate levels and casement windows, but the gable is interrupted by a further gable set at an angle with a large external flint chimneystack.

The south or garden front is curved and symmetrical of five bays with the service wing extending outwards to the east. The centre of the main house has a hipped dormer and below a two storey large square bay, with an eight-light mullioned and transomed casement to the first floor and nine-light to the ground floor. There is an attached curved wooden balcony with balusters edged with shingles with half-glazed doorcases to ground and first floors. These terminate on each side with a large external flint chimneystack. The ends of the curve have hipped dormers and mullioned and transomed casement windows to the ground floor. Angled gables have five-light windows to the first floor and six-light windows to the ground floor. Attached flint terrace walls. The service wing has a hipped dormer, first floor eight-light window pierced by two hipped dormers, a two and a three-light window to the ground floor and a round-headed entrance with casement window and door set at an angle and servants bell.

East elevation has a large half-hipped gable to the south and a series of hipped dormers at two levels. Attached to this side is a tall unknapped flint courtyard wall with Horsham stone slab triangular coping and square corner piers with flint acorn finials.

INTERIOR: The entrance vestibule has chalk walls and flint octagonal roof decoration and a wide fireplace with flat band and keystone. A chalk corridor with three round-headed arches leads to the staircase and a hall to the south. This has a ceiling with plasterwork and floral and grape motifs around the edges, a cambered fireplace with stone arched surround with keystone and herringbone brickwork and built-in oak cupboards and radiators with iron hinges. The Dining Room has a fireplace with very wide wooden bressumer from the demolished "Bear" inn in Horsham and seats, wide floor boards and two large paired doors. The Library has a chalk four-centred arched fireplace with acorn-shaped stops, some narrow bricks and some decorative tiles. A further room has a large brick fireplace with diamond-shaped keystone.

The service wing retains the service staircase with wooden splat balusters and square newel posts, sitting room with original brick fireplace, kitchen retaining wide fireplace and cupboards, laundry with stone sinks, dairy with slate shelves and larder with brick shelves and game hooks.

The staircase has two round-headed arches to a gallery, corridors with round-headed arches with original built-in cupboards and linen cupboards. Some fireplaces and all the original doors survive. The attics have angled queen struts and collar beams but the rafters have been renewed. The iron wheel of a lift mechanism remains.

HISTORY: George Trotter sold the house in 1919 to a Mr Philip Henderson. Later the house was bought by the Norbertines, a Pre-Monstratensian order. In 1956 the house became a hostel for Hungarian refugees. From 1965 it was the house of the Roman Catholic bishop of Arundel and Brighton.

An intact and fine quality Vernacular Revival house of c1910 built of local materials, some reused.

D. Reason for Application

The existing house is underserved with vehicle storage to serve the house and the adjacent agricultural land in the and the proposal seeks to provide garaging in an appropriate fashion, such that the continued use of the listed house and its outbuildings can be maintained and supported in the 21st Century context of its existence and maintenance.

E. Detail of Proposals:

The pre-app application examined alternative locations and forms for the proposed garaging, adjacent to 'Annexe', the existing outbuilding complex (separately listed List Entry Number: 1391343), and concluded that the proposal does not compromise the setting of Gerston Hall and makes a contextually appropriate adjustment to the to the setting of the walled complex of staff housing and service buildings (the 'outbuildings', including the Annexe).

The proposal also considered the extant garden feature of the low walled enclosure (to a now filled in pond) to the south of the outbuildings. Detail investigation suggests that it is a late addition as the pointing and brickwork seems to be mid to late 20th C., its buttress features are out of scale and gestural and it has been unused for decades, with no substantial indication of its usefulness. With the exception of the entrance gate, which is of quality aged joinery and should be saved for re-use, this construction offers no constructive addition to the setting of both listed buildings and is proposed to be removed and built over as it is the most appropriate location for the proposed new garaging.

The proposal is to provide the required garaging by adding a distinctly 'country' and 'agricultural' building type as illustrated on drawings GHS 221, 222 and 223). This design seeks to fit the context by using the same tiled roof with gablets format of the 'outbuildings' and is located adjacent to the 'Annexe' and backing on to the agricultural fields and vineyard that it will also serve, placing the 4 garage spaces serving the house at the end of the driveway and adjacent to the approach paths and landscaping of Gerston Hall. This location places the building into the ancillary building group, leaving the immediate setting of Gerston Hall clear and unadulterated while retaining the distinctiveness of the outbuilding walled courtyard by making it a clearly agricultural building type.

The use of the untreated oak frame structure and oak feather edged boarding will also give the building a colour that will quickly fade in weathering to a pale buff / grey that will harmonise with stone and lime mortar pointing of the knapped flint wall faces of Gerston Hall.

While this positioning closes the distant view to a treeline on the far side of the agricultural land, it adds to the significance of the Oak and draws the eye towards the open space between the Oak and Gerston Hall, to the dramatic, uninterrupted South Downs landscape beyond and ultimately to Gerston Hall, reinforcing its position in the landscape.

Summary: We propose that the strategy to insert a new building with an appropriate scale and typology into the existing setting, with massing, form and materials that relates to the existing outbuilding group without challenging it. It is a positive solution to providing essential facilities to maintain Gerston Hall and its environment, merging comfortably into its rural and agricultural setting.

F. Photographs:



The approach to the Gerston Hall West entrance, looking South to the view to the South Downs landscape beyond, from the head of the drive.



The approach to the proposed site with the T1 Oak to the left and the Annex to the right



The driveway, looking East from the proposed site and the head of the drive



The mature Oak T1 with proposed site and the outbuilding group beyond, looking North



SW corner of Annexe, with the outbuilding group and butressed courtyard wall beyond



East elevation of listed outbuildings group and showing the butressed courtyard entrance



The existing open parking area beyond the redundant modern garden wall



Detail of the existing garden wall
(not contemporary with Gerston Hall)



and gate (to be reclaimed for re-use)