
From: Nicola.Mason
Sent: 23 May 2022 10:44
To: Pauline.Ollive
Subject: Topsy Fox, Southwater - DC/22/0500 and 0513

Dear Pauline

The Topsy Fox (formally known as The Cock Inn) is a grade 2 listed building situated on the western side of Worthing Road, at its junction with Church Lane. The back or west wing is a C16 timber-framed building, partly patched with weather-boarding and brick. The front or east wing is C18. The building is situated on the London to Worthing routeway, and would have provided refreshment and a stopping point for travellers passing through the area. Whilst the land around the site has changed as development has encroached the listed building still retains its garden to the west, and its prominent village location. The buildings significance relates primarily to its architectural interest and the historic fabric of the building exemplifying local vernacular building traditions and the evolution of country pubs.

The application seeks full planning permission and listed building consent for a single storey brick building used as a kitchen, a brick building for a fridge, covered seating area, children's play area and a single decker bus used as a draught bar. The works have already been undertaken within the grounds of the listed building.

Whilst it is understood why the works have been undertaken particularly due to the operating restrictions and economic constraints of the pandemic the current application seeks to permanently retain the structures. In considering therefore whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, special regard should be given to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

It is considered that the proposed play area although within the curtilage of the listed building is of a scale and design that allows views through it, and does not compete with an understanding of the main building due to its location set in the north western corner. Its retention is therefore considered to result in no additional harm to the setting of the listed building.

The fridge, and kitchen buildings and the converted bus however have resulted in a proliferation of buildings on the site that obscure an understanding of the historic building, and do not preserve its setting or special interest. The flat roofed outside kitchen in modern brick, and converted bus are not reflective of the vernacular architecture of the pub, or sympathetic to its character. The location of the bus within the garden area would not be an expected addition to the building and would result in a perception of modern vehicles being parked in not only the car park, but also the garden. It is noted that the Heritage Statement argues that the rear extensions have lessened the sensitivity of these elevations however less sensitive extensions are not a justification for further incongruous structures. It is therefore considered that the proposal results in less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset. This harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

Kind regards

Nicola

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