Planning Statement with Heritage Consideration

Proposal: Erection of a first-floor rear balcony (Retrospective)
Site Address: Kennels Cottages, Wheatsheaf Road, Woodmancote, West Sussex

1. Introduction

This planning statement supports a retrospective application for the erection of a first-floor rear balcony at Kennels Cottages, Wheatsheaf Road, Woodmancote, West Sussex. It outlines how the development complies with relevant planning policies, assesses its impact on the surrounding area, and provides a heritage statement regarding the nearby Listed Building, Little Finches.

2. Site and Surroundings

Kennels Cottages is a semi-detached residential property located in a rural setting along Wheatsheaf Road. The property features a private rear garden and is surrounded by similar residential dwellings, with open countryside forming the wider setting.

The site is not within a conservation area, nor is it a listed property. However, Little Finches, a Listed Building, is situated opposite the site, necessitating a consideration of its setting and any potential impact.

3. Description of Development

The development consists of a first-floor rear balcony, constructed to enhance the functionality and enjoyment of the property. The balcony is modest in scale, positioned to overlook the property's private rear garden, and built using timber and steel materials that complement the existing structure. It is accessed via double doors from the first-floor rear bedroom and is enclosed by a safety railing.

4. Heritage Statement

Little Finches, a Listed Building, is located opposite the site. The key considerations in assessing the impact of the proposed balcony on its setting are:

- **Separation Distance:** The Listed Building is positioned on the opposite side of Wheatsheaf Road, ensuring a clear physical distinction between the two properties.
- **Visual Impact:** The balcony is located at the rear of Kennels Cottages, meaning it is not visible from the public realm or from Little Finches itself.
- **Character and Setting:** The modest design and use of sympathetic materials ensure that the balcony does not intrude upon or detract from the historic character of Little Finches.

Given the above factors, the development does not adversely affect the setting or significance of Little Finches as a Listed Building.

5. Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):
The NPPF supports sustainable development, good design, and the protection of heritage assets. Paragraphs 126 and 130 emphasize the need for well-designed additions that integrate with surroundings and respect local character.

Local Development Plan Policies:

- **DP12 (Protection and Enhancement of Countryside):** The balcony does not harm the rural character of the area and ensures minimal impact on its surroundings.
- **DP26 (Character and Design):** The balcony is sympathetically designed to blend with the existing property.
- **DP29 (Noise, Air, and Light Pollution):** The design respects the privacy of neighboring properties and limits potential overlooking.
- **Heritage Policy Considerations:** As the development does not affect the setting of Little Finches, it aligns with policies aimed at protecting listed buildings.

6. Design and Impact Assessment

a. Design: The balcony is proportionate and aligns with the aesthetic of the existing building, using materials that ensure compatibility.

b. Residential Amenity: The balcony overlooks the applicant's private garden and does not result in significant overlooking or loss of privacy for neighboring properties.

c. Visual Impact: The rear placement of the balcony limits its visibility from the public realm and ensures it does not impact the rural character.

d. Heritage Impact: Given its scale, location, and materials, the balcony does not have an adverse effect on the setting of Little Finches.

7. Justification for Retention

The balcony provides a valuable outdoor amenity without compromising the visual or residential amenity of the area. Its design is in keeping with the host property and the surrounding setting. Furthermore, it does not affect the setting or significance of the Listed Building opposite. The retention of the balcony aligns with planning policies and contributes positively to the property's use.

8. Conclusion

The retrospective application for the first-floor rear balcony at Kennels Cottages is compliant with national and local planning policies. The development is well-designed, respects neighboring amenity, and does not adversely impact the setting of the nearby Listed Building, Little Finches.

We respectfully request the Council's approval of this retrospective application.