SAM·JOHNSON
HERITAGE

# Heritage Impact Assessment and Design and Access Statement

## Springwells, 9 High Street

## Steyning

March 2024
Project Ref: SJH24/003
On behalf of Mrs Elizabeth Arrmstrong



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# 1. Introduction

1.1. The owner of the grade II* listed Springwells House, Mrs. Armstrong has commissioned Sam Johnson Heritage Ltd. to assist in making an application to regularise a breach of planning in relation to a curtilage listed wall at Springwells House. A section of wall was removed in 2017 due to instability and highway safety fears, but the reinstatement of the section of the wall, which was required by consent granted in 2018 (Ref: DC/18/2193 ), was not implemented.

1.2. The statement below seeks to demonstrate the low value of the section of wall that was removed and the correspondingly low contribution it made to the overall significance of Springwells and the Steyning Conservation Area. A justification for maintaining the existing boundary treatments is provided. The statement concludes that the character and appearance of the Steyning Conservation Area would be conserved, and the most important heritage values associated with the grade II* listed Springwells would be unharmed. The application would therefore comply with the overarching aims of the NPPF paragraphs 200, 205, 208, 212, 213; and the relevant Horsham District Planning Framework 2015.

# 2. Relevant Policy and Guidance

## Legislation

2.1. Where development has the potential to affect the historic environment and its heritage assets the legislative framework includes the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 16(2) requires a local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses when considering applications for listed building consent. Section 66(1) of the 1990 Act sets out that a planning authority will also exercise this same special regard in carrying out their planning functions.

2.2. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990 requires local planning authorities to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving the character or appearance of a conservation area.

## National policy

2.3. The legislative framework informs the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which was most recently revised in December 2023, and sets out the overarching principles for sustainable development, including development which affects the historic environment. The NPPF seeks to achieve sustainable development by pursuing economic, social, and environmental gains simultaneously. The NPPF recognises that protection and enhancement of the historic built environment is an essential part of sustainable development[1], and sets out that it is a core planning principle to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations[2].

[1] NPPF Paragraph 8(c), page 5
[2] NPPF Paragraph 184, page 54

2.4. The specific policies in respect of the historic environment are contained within Section 16 of the NPPF. Paragraph 200 requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage asset that would be affected by a development proposal, including any contribution made by their setting, to an appropriate level of detail.

2.5. Paragraph 203 states that in determining applications, local authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing heritage assets and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. This same requirement for sensitive development is reiterated within the design policies of the NPPF which set out that permission should be refused for poor design, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in supplementary planning documents. Conversely, where design accords with clear expectations in plan policies, design should not be a reason for refusing consent[3].

2.6. Paragraphs 205-208 of the NPPF relate to decision taking in relation to proposals that would cause harm to designated heritage assets. Paragraph 205 states that in considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). Paragraph 206 sets out that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.

2.7. Where substantial harm would occur, NPPF paragraph 207 requires consent be refused, unless the substantial harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the loss, or where a number of stringent tests can be demonstrably applied. Where the harm caused would be less than substantial (as with the proposal under consideration), the harm should be weighed against the public benefits associated with the proposal (Paragraph 208). Public benefits are described in the accompanying Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), and include heritage benefits such as sustaining and enhancing the significance of a heritage asset, reducing risks to an asset or securing an optimum viable use in support of its long-term conservation[4].

2.8. Paragraph 209 relates to non-designated heritage assets where a balanced judgement must be made about regarding the scale of any harm or loss to their significance. Sites of archaeological interest equivalent to a scheduled monument, should be treated as a designated heritage asset.

2.9. In relation to the setting of designated heritage assets and development within Conservation Areas, the NPPF states at paragraph 212 that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development to enhance or better reveal their significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 207 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 208, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area as a whole[5].

[3] NPPF Paragraph 128, page 39
[4] National Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph 020 Reference ID: 18a-020-20190723
[5] NPPF Paragraph 207, page 58

## Local heritage policies

2.10. Horsham's current local plan is The Horsham District Planning Framework (excluding the South Downs National Park), November 2015. It is under review, but remains valid at the time of writing.

2.11. Chapter 9 of the Framework sets out the Council's policies in respect of Conserving and Enhancing the Natural and Built Environment. Policy 34 recognises the variety of heritage assets within the borough and the contribution they make to Horsham District. It broadly mirrors advice within the much more recent NPPF and requires applicants to:

- Reference the significance of heritage assets;
- Reflect current best practice produced by English Heritage [now Historic England] and Conservation Area Character Statements;
- Reinforce the special character of the District's historic environment;
- Make a positive contribution to character and distinctiveness;
- Preserve and ensure clear legibility of vernacular building forms;
- Secure the sustainable future of heritage assets;
- Retain and improve the setting of heritage assets and;
- Ensure appropriate archaeological research is undertaken.

## National and local guidance and advice

### Historic England's Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment 2015 (GPA2)

2.12. GPA2 provides a suggested staged approach to decision-making where there may be a potential impact on the historic environment. This begins with ensuring a good understanding of the significance of affected assets and how that understanding should be used to avoid or minimise impacts of the proposal, then look at ways in which opportunities can be taken to enhance or better reveal significance and finally to justify or offset remaining harmful impacts.

2.13. With particular regard to design and local distinctiveness, GPA2 sets out advice to assist in designing successful contextual solutions taking account of a range of factors such as the history, character, topography, and landscape features of a place; views into and out of a site; the diversity or uniformity of existing buildings; and the type and quality of materials in an area[6].

### Historic England's Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 (2nd Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets (GPA3)

2.14. GPA3 provides a broad definition of setting as the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced, which may therefore be more extensive than the curtilage of an asset. While views will be an important part of this experience of setting, it may also incorporate further environmental factors such as dust, noise, and vibration from other land uses.

2.15. The guidance recommends a staged approach to assess the impact of a proposal on the significance of heritage assets as derived from their setting:

[6] Historic England Good Practice Advice Note 2, Page 15

Step 1: Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected;

Step 2: Assess the degree to which these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated;

Step 3: Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance or on the ability to appreciate it;

Step 4: Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm;

Step 5: Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.

# 2. Heritage Assets

## Significance

3.1. The term 'significance' was introduced by English Heritage (now Historic England) in the 2008 publication 'Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment'. It is now widely used by heritage professionals to describe the various values that are assigned to any given heritage asset. Going beyond the narrower statutory designation of listed buildings and other designated heritage assets, 'significance' encompasses a range of values that may be relevant to any heritage asset, designated or not. The terms used in the existing guidance differ subtly to those used in the NPPF and statutory legislation, and the document is under review to provide greater consistency in the language used to describe heritage values, (or interests in NPPF terms[7]).

3.2. Conservation Principles describes four broad and often inter-related values: Evidential Values (or archaeological interest in NPPF terms); Historical Value (or historic interest); Aesthetic Value (or architectural/artistic interest) and Communal Value (or historic interest).

- Evidential Values derive from the physical remains of a place and their ability to yield evidence of past human activity. Typically, evidential values refer to archaeological deposits as a primary record of past activity.
- Historical Values are those that provide us with an insight into the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected to the present. Illustrative historical values aid interpretation of the past, for example by illustrating a prevailing fashion or taste at a given point in history. Associative historical values derive from notable persons or events identifiable with a particular place.
- Aesthetic Values derive from the ways in which people respond to a place be it in the conscious architectural design of a building, or the incidental evolution of a place over time.
- Communal Values are those that collectively connect people with places bound up with an historic association, for example places with specific commemorative or symbolic meanings[8].

## Summary of Steyning's development

3.3. Steyning is located on the lower scarp of the South Downs, which rise to 190m immediately west of the town. The centre of the town lies 1.3km west of the River Adur, and the eastern suburbs of the town adjoin the floodplain. The Adur was navigable during the early history of the town, but ceased to provide a port function by the 14th century owing to the silting up of the channel.

3.4. The town is situated just off the A283, a modern bypass taking traffic away from the old Shoreham-Pulborough road that previously ran through the town. The main streets of Steyning are The High Street, which runs south-east to north-west; and Newham Lane/Church Street, running south-west

[7] NPPF, page 71
[8] Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment (2008), pages 28-32

to north-east. The two streets form a cross roads around which the principal activity of the town is focused.

3.5. In common with the rest of the county, the geology is sedimentary, with chalks in downland areas, and a band of siltstone from the Upper Greensand formation on the northern side of Steyning.

## Early history

3.6. Excavations have revealed prehistoric archaeology in the area of White Horse Square and Coombe Court, and a Late Bronze Age hoard was discovered in 1981 indicating a buried occupation layer at Clays Field. The Greensand Way is the only reliably attributed Roman road in the area, some 2km north of Steyning, but finds of Roman tile/brick and pottery have been found within Steyning at Saxon Road and King's Barn Lane.

3.7. The etymology of Steyning is derived from the Old English 'stæning' meaning 'places characterized by stones', but which stones this refers to is unclear. Steyning originated as an Anglo-Saxon minster, understood to have been founded in the late 7th or early 8th centuries by St Cuthman, A text from this period survives and describes the building of a timber church. Its transferal from ecclesiastical to royal centre is confirmed by the burial in 858 of King Æthelwulf at the site of the present-day church (although the remains were later relocated).

3.8. The economic vitality of the town accelerated in the 11th century and Steyning was an urban centre with its own mint by 1018. The Domesday Book of 1086 records 126 dwellings, and the first reference to weekly markets appear by the late 11th century, although are believed to have been operating for some time prior to this date.

3.9. During the 11th century, the minster was succeeded by a Norman college of secular canons belonging to the abbey of the Holy Trinity, Fecamp, owning land associated with the parishes of Steyning, Ashurst, Warminghurst and possibly West Angmering. Nearby, William de Braose had been granted the Rape of Bramber, and was intent on expanding his borough to rival the supremacy of Steyning; the dispute between the Abbey of Fecamp and the de Braose family was protracted , with de Braose claiming parts of the town in the late 11th century. The port at Steyning, known as St Cuthman's Port is understood to have begun a process of decline as early as c1100, accelerated by de Braose and his founding of New Shoreham.

3.10. The rise of New Shoreham was to have an impact on the fortunes and development of Steyning during the 12th and 13th centuries, but the subsequent silting up of the estuary there in the 14th century impeded its further growth. Steyning retained its weekly markets and annual fairs into the 16th century. Important trades in the town in the late-medieval period included shoemakers and tanners, including one recorded at the stream near Singwells (now Springwells) at the south-east edge of the town. Associated arable farming provided animals for these industries.

3.11. Tanning, cloth-making and glovers remained important trades into the 16th century, and the wealth and economic vitality of the town remained relatively stable throughout the post-medieval period.

## 18th – 20th Century Expansion

3.12. The 1832 electoral Reform Act identified Steyning as 'one of 56 rotten boroughs and disenfranchised'. Despite this indication of decline, the overall picture of Steyning is one of sustained population and economic growth. It was designated as a location for barracks during the Napoleonic Wars; and industries such as tanning and brewing continued into the early years of the 20th century. Chalk extraction and lime-burning, along with quarrying also became important during the 20th century.

3.13. Communications also steadily improved, first with the turnpiking of the Upper Beeding to Shoreham road, and later with the arrival of the railway in 1861. The latter resulted in the rapid expansion of the town around the station, and with the large villas at Goring Road. Expansion continued in the post war years with new social housing at Shooting Field, Penlands and The Ridings.

## Historic Mapping

3.14. The settlement of Steyning today has no known surviving buildings, other than the church, dating from before the mid-14th century. It is believed that the development of medieval Steyning began in the area of the former minster precinct and the modern High Street, with burgage plots appearing along the High Street by the early 13th century. The earliest surviving timber framed buildings of 1350-1500 date are concentrated along the High Street between the cross-roads and Tanyard Lane, and the south-west end of Church Street.

3.15. Jettied buildings survive from the 16th century, replacing earlier open hall houses, and by the 17th century carriage entrances at various buildings suggest the increase in coach travel. In addition to the visible timber framed buildings in the town, there are a considerable number of brick or mathematical tiled faced buildings of apparent 18th century date, which are in fact re-faced timber framed buildings. This includes the subject building, 9 High Street.

3.16. The map of 1791 shows the morphology of the town at this time. Buildings are concentrated in the 'U' created by the curving High Street and Church Lane, with the Commons fields undeveloped at this time. Dog Lane is denoted on this map, and the application site, shown as a square plan building is situated on the north side of Dog Lane fronting the High Street. On this map, the frontage of the building abuts the High Street. A change in the road layout means that it is now set back from the road.

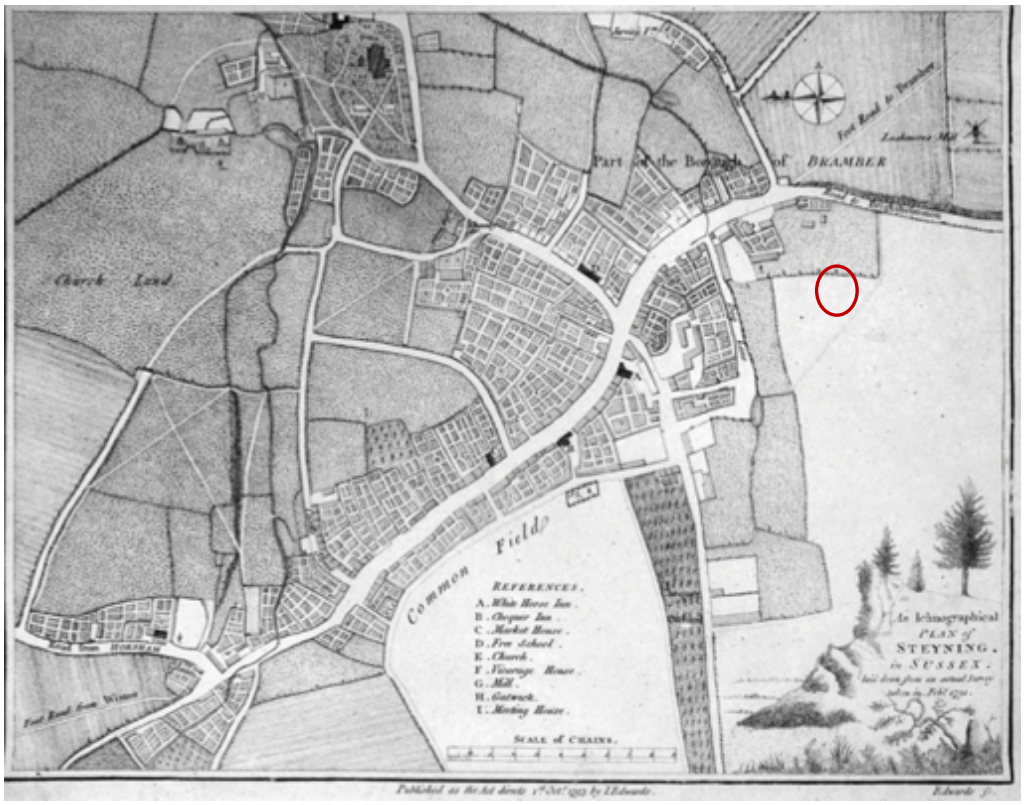



Figure 1: Edwards Map of Steyning, 1791, application site indicated



Figure 2: Tithe map, 1840

3.17. The morphology of the town is little changed at the time of the 1840 tithe map. The land on which 9 High Street is built is at this time owned by the Duke of Norfolk, and occupied by George Gates. It is again shown as a square plan building, possibly by this time with the front garden incorporated from the street.




Figure 3: Sussex Sheet LI; Surveyed: 1875, Published: 1879

3.18. The First edition OS Map of 1879 is the first map to show the town in great detail. Here, Dog Lane is shown running south along the boundary of 9 High Street. The footprint of the building is shown as having two modest westward projections, and a front garden area incorporated into the property. The map of 1899 shows a similar arrangement.




Figure 4: Sussex Sheet LI.SE; Revised: 1896, Published: 1899




Figure 5: Sussex LI.12; Revised: 1909, Published: 1911

3.19. The map of 1911 shows the house in further detail. Here the extended form of the house is visible, with the altered shape of the High Street allowing for a rounded front garden to the property. A number of outbuildings, including a glasshouse are shown in the rear garden area behind Dog Lane (at this time called Brewery Lane) which encloses the southern boundary of the site. On the south side of Brewery/Dog Lane is the long east-west building shown in all the mapping above, here annotated as a brewery.

## Designated Heritage Assets

3.20. The NPPF requires applicants to assess the significance of heritage assets that would be affected by a proposed development, including the contribution made by their settings (paragraph 200). The level of detail should be no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

3.21. The application under consideration affects the setting of the host listed building, Springwells (9 High Street) and this part of the Steyning Conservation Area. It also has some impact on the setting of the listed building on the south side of Dog Lane here, Rosewell Cottage. The application site is also within an Archaeological Notification Area (ANA), but no archaeological impacts would arise.

3.22. A brief description is therefore provided of the host site, 9 High Street, along with immediately adjacent listed building at Rosewell Cottage to the south of the application site, and the conservation area in this location. It is not considered necessary to consider the significance of nearby listed buildings in great detail, given the nature of the proposal, which is to regularise a planning breach of a situation that has existed since 2018.

## Summary Significance of Springwells, 9 High Street

3.23. Springwells, so named for its adjacency to a small spring, and the pond it fed to the west of the application site, is a grade II* listed building: one of six within Steyning at this high grade. There is evidence of sprigs in this area for at least 500 years, and it is possible that those at Springwells, formerly 'Singwells' or 'Sewyngwell' were blessed by St Cuthbert. The map below shows the concentration of listed buildings in this part of the conservation area.

3.24. The list description for the house is brief, and reads as follows:

> ***"STEYNING HIGH STREET 1. (south-west side) 5404 No 9 (Springwells Hotel) (Formerly listed as No 9 (Cuthman's Guest House) TQ 1711 24/121 15.3.55***
>
> *Grade: II**
>
> *List Entry Number: 1027281*
>
> *Date first listed: 15-Mar-1955*
>
> *2. C18. Two storeys and attic. Six windows. One small dormer. Grey headers with red brick dressings and quoins. Wooden eaves cornice. Hipped roof of Horsham slabs. Glazing bars intact. Five of first floor windows are in wooden surrounds. The sixth and all the ground floor windows have shallow reveals. On the ground floor two tripartite windows of which the centre section has a curved head and one ordinary sash window. Later brick porch with pilasters, pediment and doorway with rectangular fanlight."*



Figure 6: Front (east) elevation of Springwells, 9 High Street

3.25. The history of the building has not been researched in great detail. A publication 'Springwells Hotel, 9 High Street, Steyning, West Sussex: A History (1999)' by Janet Pennington provides a history of the site, but the document has not been fully available. It states that the earliest reference to a house on the site of Springwells shows a burgage messuage on this site of 1671 but suggests that a building may have been located here before that date. It also suggests that the present house is 'at least the third rebuilding of a house on this site' although it is not clear whether this represents a complete or partial rebuild.

3.26. Springwells is outwardly a house of early 19th century date. It, along with much of the land was owned in the early 1800s by the Duke of Norfolk, and in 1820, George Gates of Steyning became the occupier of the house. It is believed that either the Duke, or Gates himself were responsible for the rebuilding (or substantial renovation) of Springwells. A date of between 1807 and 1820 has been attributed to the present building. Gates was registered as a Brewer and Maltster, and the decline of the unpleasant tannery industries at this end of the town would have made the location of Springwells more attractive to this wealthy merchant.

3.27. Springwells has a handsome principal façade of grey brick with generous sash windows, a hipped roof and substantial pilastered doorcase. The house is six bays, with the porch offset slightly to the north. At ground floor level, the porch is flanked by two tripartite windows, the central light of which has a curved head. At first floor level are five six over six sashes in wooden surrounds.

These windows have shallow reveals and broader astragals than the further first floor window to the south, which is a three over six arrangement; and the ground floor windows, indicating that the first floor windows are mostly of an earlier date. The front (east) façade of the house is faced in grey brick headers, with red brick quoins and red brick dressings to windows. A Horsham slab hipped roof is laid in diminishing courses, with a shallow flat headed dormer central to the front roof slope.

3.28. The asymmetrical appearance of the house, and the presence of a central stack to the rear indicate that this building may have been re-faced in the 18th century with an earlier timber frame behind, indeed this is the assumption recorded in the West Sussex Historic Character Assessment Report for Steyning (2004). The interior of the house has not been inspected as part of this application, and so the presence of an earlier timber frame cannot be verified, but it seems probable, and is suggested by the high designation awarded to this building.

3.29. The rear elevation of the property is in red brick with grey headers, and a later rear wing in red brick laid in stretcher bond has also been added. Further additions and alterations, particularly to the rear have occurred to facilitate the historic use of the house as a hotel/restaurant. Today, it is in use as a residential building.

3.30. The front garden of the property is open to the High Street, enclosed by a low box hedge, with a gravel garden behind. A very large specimen fir tree is located adjacent to the house.

3.31. Springwells adjoins the very narrow Dog Lane. As described above, this lower part of Dog Lane is characterised by buildings sitting hard on its edge, as at the grade II listed Rosewell Cottage (a former brewery), or has brick and/or flint walls enclosing gardens, as to Springwells.

3.32. No historic photographs of the part of the building adjoining Dog Lane have been found, and the mapping above is not definitive in terms of the former boundary treatments employed at the site. The High Street was historically wider, and it is clear from the mapping that the front garden was created from land borrowed from the main highway in the 19th century. The boundary wall along Dog Lane which encloses the rear garden is likely to date from the 18th or 19th centuries. It is built of cobbled flints, probably recovered from the chalk fields of the nearby Downland, or coastal areas, and has brick dressings. Brick buttresses have been used to strengthen the wall at intervals along its length. Owing to its age, and association with the grade II* listed house, the walls benefit from curtilage listing.

3.33. The garden walls themselves are of little intrinsic value, being simply constructed in flint with brick piers to enclose the rear garden of Springwells along the narrow Dog Lane. They have been buttressed at a later date, possibly owing to ground movement, defective construction quality of the walls, or owing to increased vehicular movement along Dog Lane. No evidence has been found that garden walls ever fully enclosed the front garden to the property, which until the 19th century sat hard on the High Street, with the front garden area only being incorporated from the main road at this time. The walls, while making a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area and the setting of the listed building, remain substantially intact along the southern boundary of the property. The section that has been removed is at a very narrow point in Dog Lane, where visibility for vehicles approaching the High Street/Dog Lane is reduced.

3.34. The rear garden of Springwells has been reduced in size owing in part to the creation of a separate dwelling, Bay Cottage from an outbuilding previously within the curtilage of Springwells. More significant changes to the setting of the listed building arise from the more intensively used High Street, and from additions and alterations to the property during its use as a hotel/guest house.

## Heritage Values of Springwells

3.35. Springwells has high aesthetic value as a 'polite' classically fronted building of 18th century appearance. The high-quality local bricks, use of Horsham slab and sash windows elevate the importance of the building to one of some standing, and the 18th century refronting is indicative of the wealth of former owners, wanting to project their status through the prevailing architectural styles of the time. It seems possible that the house has earlier origins, with some clues provided externally in the placement of the chimney stacks, and the asymmetry of the house, but no internal inspection has been made to verify this. The house is therefore also of interest for its historic illustrative values, and for the archaeological potential it may possess. The communal values of the property are moderate, owing to its long term use as a restaurant/hotel/guest house, and the collective memories of former visitors.

3.36. The setting of the listed building contributes positively to its significance. It sits at the junction of two character areas of the Steyning Conservation Area, but was one of the buildings located at its fringe historically, with the sinuous and narrow Dog Lane marking the edge of the settlement, where brewing and tanning are understood to have taken place. The boundary walls form part of the setting of the listed building and complement the character of the area.

## Summary of significance of Rosewell Cottage



Figure 7: Rosewell Cottage, 7 High Street

3.37. Rosewell Cottage is a grade II listed building located immediately to the south of Springwells. A former brewery, it has subsequently been converted to residential use. A full assessment of the building is not considered necessary to support this application. The list description for the building reads:

***"STEYNING HIGH STREET 1. (south-west side) 5404 No 7 (The Old Brewery House) TQ 1711 24/120***

*Grade II*

*List Entry Number: 1180480*

*2. This was originally not the brewery house but the brewery itself which has been converted into a residence. Dated 1772. Three storeys and attic. Two windows facing High Street, four windows facing Dog Lane and a continuous dormer of four windows. Faced with flints with two modern tile-hung bays facing High Street and one facing Dog Lane. Tiled roof. Modern windows. Stone in the Dog Lane front with the date 1772 and the name "S In Stoveld"."*

3.38. The side (north_ elevation of the property stretches along Dog Lane, opposite to the boundary wall belonging to Springwells. The building sits hard on the edge of Dog Lane and is built in flint, with brick dressings. Bay and oriel windows, along with a attic level box dormer have been added to the property which erode the original industrial detailing of the property and provide it with a more residential appearance, although the form and scale of the building mark it out as historically having a different use. It has high historic value, moderate aesthetic value and some evidential value as a former brewery building illustrating the industrial uses of the historic town. The height of the building and the effect it has of enclosing Dog Lane, adjacent to Springwells is important in contributing to the character of this part of the conservation area.

## Summary of significance of the Steyning Conservation Area

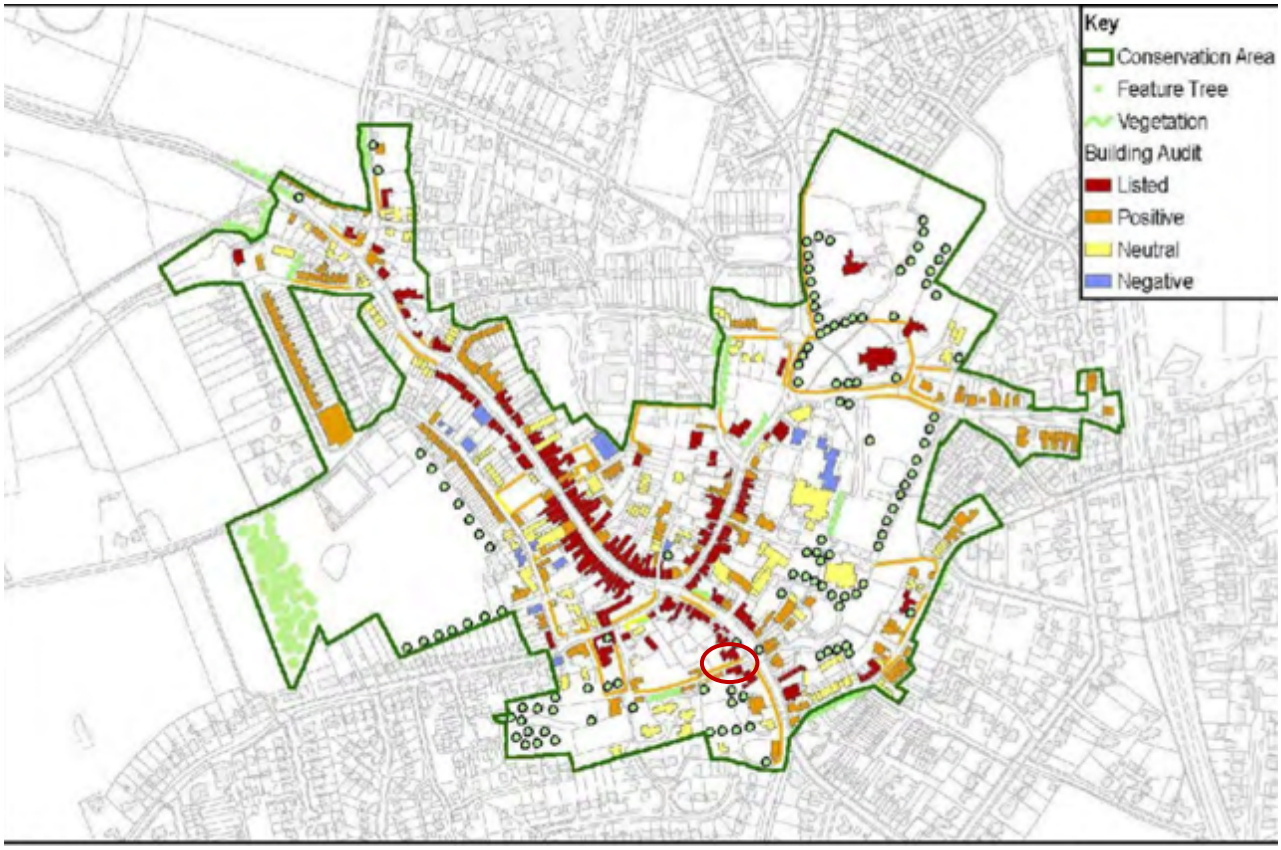



Figure 8: Extent of the Steyning Conservation Area, application site circled red; Source: Steyning CACA

3.39. A conservation Area Character Appraisal has been produced for Steyning. This summarises the special interest of Steyning as deriving from several key facets:

- *"The street plan reflects the evolution of Steyning from a Saxon village centred on a minster to a medieval market town with densely packed burgage plots fronting the High Street and western half of Church Street, providing evidence of its ancient origins.*
- *The Conservation Area has a strong relationship with its natural location and setting. The undulating topography makes an important contribution to the sense of place, and there are views of the South Downs in several different directions from within it.*
- *The historic origins and development of the town through the medieval, post-medieval and industrial periods is still clearly discernible in the surviving townscape and streetplan.*
- *There is a high concentration of nationally listed buildings in the Conservation Area - 109 in total, with six listed at Grade II* and two listed at Grade I - exemplifying a wide range of building types and architectural styles. Many have important group value.*
- *There are numerous unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution to local character. Among them are potential candidates for national listing.*
- *The buildings within the Conservation Area utilise local building materials in a wide range of distinctive vernacular and historic construction techniques. There is a large number of other*

*important built townscape features – boundary walls, hard landscaping, street furniture and so on – that help to create an integrated historic environment.*

- *There are two large green spaces within the Conservation Area, which are important public amenities and vital elements in the setting of individual buildings or groups of buildings. The Memorial Playing Field Village Green is an important part of the historic centre's original setting, which otherwise has mostly been lost to 20th century residential development."*

3.40. The Steyning Conservation Area is subdivided into several character areas, with Springwells (9 High Street) falling into 'The Commercial Centre', but immediately abutting 'The Medieval Town Fringe'. The latter area is characterized by smaller streets that fanned out into the open countryside from the town Centre, and the main streets of the High Street and Church Lane. The plot sizes are more irregular at this end of the town, where brewing and tanning were prevalent. The grade II listed Rosewell Cottage falls within this character area, and was once a brewery of 18th century date, now converted to residential use. The CACA notes the contribution of Dog Lane to this area, as a narrow street with a quieter and more verdant character than those parts of the town further north. The presence of boundary walls is also recognised.

3.41. The Commercial Centre area encompasses the application site itself, but it is on the fringe of this area which is otherwise characterised by a high density of buildings, many listed, and many timber framed. Building materials are noted as varied including timber framing, brick, tile hanging, and the use of Horsham slab roofing, as at the application site.

3.42. The application site fronts the High Street where its handsome and uniform façade undoubtedly has considerable presence in the street scene. The juxtaposition of the grand façade with the narrow, rural Dog Lane, and the former industrial character of the former brewery to the south provides an interesting focal point in the conservation area. The former brewery, now much altered sits hard on Dog Lane, with a later brick boundary wall enclosing a front garden. On the north side of Dog Lane a brick and flint boundary wall encloses the garden of 9 High Street, and Bay Cottage to the west. The effect of buildings sitting hard to the edge of Dog Lane, along with boundary walls, and the very narrow width of the street combine to provide a high sense of enclosure here that overall contributes to the sense of place in this part of the conservation area.




Figure 9: Views looking east along Dog Lane towards the application site

3.43. The heritage values of the southern section of the conservation area are considerable and include high aesthetic and historic values, and high evidential values arising from the archaeological potential of medieval remains, recognised by the ANA.

# 4. Proposals

4.1. In 2017 a section of the garden wall adjoining Dog Lane became unsafe. Fearing a highway safety hazard, the Applicant undertook to remove part of the garden wall, to prevent it falling.

4.2. The Applicant was subsequently advised that consent was required for the removal of the wall and an application for its demolition was made (DC/17/2115). The application was refused because of the perceived harm to the character of the conservation area and the setting of the listed building.

4.3. A further application (DC/18/2193) was made in 2018 for:

" Demolition and replacement of wall and gate, erection of concrete yard, hard standing and ramp (Full Planning)"

4.4. Consent was granted for the applications, and the Applicant undertook to make good the remaining section of the wall and install the hard standing and ramp.

4.5. Family circumstances subsequently changed, with Mr. Armstrong becoming unwell and being unable to complete the work to rebuild the wall. Regrettably, the works were therefore left incomplete, which has resulted in a breach of planning now being identified.

4.6. Three further associated cases are logged against the property:

- EN/18/0361; Alleged: Unauthorised works to listed building involving the laying of a concrete ramp from the hotel to Dog Lane; the erection of a brick support against the old flint wall on Dog Lane to the left of the old gate site; wooden return back to the hotel to support the new placement of the gate; wooden frame against external chimney breast to support new gate
- EN/18/0209; Demolition of wall - DC/17/2115

4.7. Both of the above cases have been closed. A further enforcement case remains open pending consideration:

- EN/23/0462; Alleged: Failure to reinstate boundary wall to listed building

4.8. Further to the recent enforcement case, the Applicant has been advised that there is a need either to rebuild the boundary wall as set out in DC/18/2193, or to seek to regularise the existing situation at the site with a further application for planning and listed building consent.

# 5. Impact Assessment and justification

5.1. This application seeks to regularise the planning breach associated with the failure to reinstate a section of curtilage listed boundary wall after it was dismantled owing to highway safety concerns in 2017. The following section provides a justification for the regularisation and demonstrates that the loss of part of the wall has a negligible impact on the significance of Springwells and the Steyning Conservation Area.

5.2. The images below show the situation at the site prior to the removal of a section of approximately two metres of flint wall in 2017. They show the flint wall, built in cobbled flints laid in courses with a cobbled capping along the rear garden (southern boundary) of Springwells up to Bay Cottage.

East of Bay Cottage on this boundary, there is a break in the continuous wall with a timber gate installed within it. There is a further break in the wall providing vehicular access to Bay Cottage.

5.3. Close to the front (east) elevation of Springwells there was previously an arched opening in the flint wall accommodating a timber gate providing pedestrian access to the rear garden area of the property (shown in 2009 as a service area to the hotel). The appearance and condition of the section of wall that was removed is difficult to see in these images owing to vegetation, but it too was constructed in flint, terminating in a brick pier a short distance forward of the front of the house where it adjoined the granite setts demarcating the front garden of Springwells

5.4. The western end of the boundary wall, running east from Bay Cottage is built in coursed cobbled flints, with a rounded capping also in flint, and in part replaced with cement capping. Much of the pointing seems to have been replaced with cement mortars, including to the capping of the wall. The section of the wall running from the second buttress along Dog Lane eastwards to the front of Springwells incorporating the gate to Springwells is also built in flint, but the quality is lower, comprising broken flints with a brick capping. It is understood that the part of the wall that was removed was of the same appearance. The then extant section of wall is shown in the application drawings of 2018 with a brick capping, in common with the retained section.

5.5. The lost section of wall therefore is assumed, from its materials and craftsmanship, to be later than the fully cobbled section of wall further west along Dog Lane towards Bay Cottage. The wall west of Bay Cottage is again detailed differently, with a band of brickwork within the wall and a 'hogs back' brick coping.

5.6. In terms of the values associated with the dismantled section of the wall, there was little intrinsic value in the materials themselves. Similarly, the construction techniques employed were not of any significant craftsmanship or complexity. The condition of the wall along Dog Lane was, and remains variable, and repairs have repeatedly been required to maintain it, including the installation of a new buttress as part of the 2018 works.

5.7. Images of the property dating from 2009 show the section of dismantled wall, but the imaging is indistinct. The gate within the brick arch is visible, but the condition of the wall is not clear. By 2012, the vegetation growth considerably masks the wall. It is very likely that the proximity of the holly tree, and other shrubs contributed to the destabilisation of the boundary wall in this area.







Figure 10: Springwells, c.2009; Source: Google Streetmap



Figure 11:  Springwells c2012; Source: Google Streetmap

5.8. The images below show the current situation at the property, which has been unchanged since 2018.



Figure 12: Boundary wall at Springwells today

5.9. The loss of the boundary wall was considered, in the reason for refusal given in 2017 to “detract from the special townscape character and setting of the designated Conservation Area”.

5.10. The value of the wall is in its contribution to the character of the conservation area, and the setting of Springwells. It is not contested that the boundary walls are an important feature of this part of the conservation area, however, proposals for alterations must be assessed in terms of their impact to the significance of heritage assets and their settings. The NPPF sets out that conservation of heritage assets should be proportionate to their significance – the more important the asset, the greater the weight given to their conservation should be (Para 205).

5.11. The boundary wall, while a feature of the conservation area that contributes positively to it, is not listed in its own right, but is curtilage listed, and the section closest to the junction with Dog Lane is demonstrably lower quality than the section further west. It is not considered to be so important that modest and carefully considered change cannot be accommodated. The NPPF states that:

"Not all elements of a Conservation Area...will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area...should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 207 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 208, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole".

5.12. The contribution that the two metre length of removed boundary wall of Springwells made to the significance of the conservation area as a whole is clearly low. While there is a flint/brick wall along the south side of Dog Lane, it is of variable age, quality, and condition, and is punctuated by gaps, some of which are for vehicular access, and so are newly created, as at Bay Cottage. There are different coping details along the length of the wall, and there are unornamented brick piers demarcating gaps for vehicular or pedestrian access.

5.13. In some places, vegetation growth is causing damage to stone walls. There are examples of concrete pointing and capping to many parts of the boundary walls throughout this part of the conservation area.

5.14. To conclude, the level of harm to the significance of the conservation area as a whole resulting from the removal of c. two metres of boundary wall is very much at the lower end of the spectrum of harm to the designated heritage assets.

5.15. While the loss of the wall has had the effect of slightly 'opening up' views of the front garden area of Springwells at the southeast edge of the property, the impact on the setting of the house is very slight, and could be further mitigated by sensitive and appropriate planting.

5.16. The masonry of the section of the brick wall that has been dismantled is regrettably no longer at the site. As such, any rebuilding of the wall would not be using any historic materials, and would be a facsimile replacement of what was, in any case believed to be a later section of walling.

5.17. By maintaining the wall as it is, the hazardous nature of the present junction of Dog Lane/High Street would be ameliorated, which is a considerable public benefit. The reconstruction of this part of the boundary wall may also interfere with a drain which is located within Dog Lane at this location.

5.18. The effect of reinstating the lost section of wall would be very marginal to the significance of the conservation area and the setting of the listed building. There would arguably be no enhancement

to the conservation area of listed building because the wall would be in new materials, and appear intrusive in the setting as it would not have any enclosing function to the front of the property.

5.19. No evidence has been found to suggest that the boundary wall ever fully enclosed the front garden area to Springwells.

5.20. Further mitigation can be provided by placing a copy of this report on record with the West Sussex Record Office to provide a record of the changes that have taken place in respect of the boundary wall as sought by paragraph 211 of the NPF.

# 6. Design and Access Statement

## Context

6.1. The application seeks to regularise a planning breach by seeking consent NOT to reinstate a section of boundary wall of approximately two metres in length which was removed in 2017.

## Use

6.2. The proposed use is as existing – a single dwellinghouse.

## Layout

6.3. The proposed layout would be unchanged from its current state, which has persisted since 2017.

## Scale

6.4. Not applicable

## Appearance

6.5. The assessment above describes the impact to the appearance of the site. It is contended that the change to the street scene, and to the character and appearance of the conservation area and setting of the listed building would be very modest indeed, and cause less than substantial harm to the significance of designated heritage assets.

# 7. Summary and Conclusions

7.1. Springwells is an attractive and historic grade II* listed building within the Steyning Conservation Area. Enclosing boundary walls vary in age and detailing, with a section closest to the junction of Dog Lane and High Street of lower quality and more recent appearance, in common with the section that was dismantled in 2017.

7.2. The harmful impact to the significance of the conservation area as a whole, and the grade II* listed building arising from this application to regularise the planning breach and retain the existing site boundary treatments would be very low. It is considered that this application has provided a clear and convincing justification in support of maintaining the existing boundary treatments at Springwells as required by NPPF paragraph 206):

- The part of the wall that was removed was lower quality than the wholly cobbled section further to the west.
- No historic masonry survives at the site and any reinstatement would be a facsimile of a later, and arguably less significant section of wall.
- The section of wall made only a very small contribution to the significance of the Steyning Conservation Area and Springwells, which is designated principally for its pre-18th century origins and its attractive and historic 18th century re-facing.
- The reinstatement of the wall would offer no enhancement to the conservation area or the setting of the building, as the wall would have no relationship to an enclosing feature along the east front of the property.
- Conversely, maintaining the current boundary treatments would appropriately conserve the character and appearance of the conservation area, and the most significant heritage values associated with Springwells.
- There are considered to be further public benefits in respect of Highway safety and maintenance.

7.3. The Applicant has demonstrated that they have sought to conserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area, and the significance of Springwells as derived from its setting in a manner consistent with the significance and the proposals conform with the overarching aims of the NPPF paragraphs 200, 205, 208, 212, 213; and the relevant Horsham District Planning Framework 2015.