

MEMORANDUM

From:	Built Heritage Officer		
Service	Green Infrastructure	App No:	250722
Address:	The Coach House, Five Horseshoes House, White Hill, Remenham Hill, Wokingham, RG9 3EP		
Proposal:	Full planning application for the proposed erection of 1 no. detached dwelling following demolition of the existing Coach House, plus associated landscaping.		
Heritage Assets:	The Coach House at Five Horseshoes House - NDHA Five Horseshoes House – NDHA Setting of Hectorage/Rose Cottage – NDHA Setting of Park Place and Temple Combe Grade II* RGP Remenham Hill Area of Special Character (ASC)		
Site Visit Made:	Yes – external only		

Summary Of Recommendations

Objection

Comments On Proposal

The application proposes the demolition of a 19th century coach house associated with Five Horseshoes House on Remenham Hill. Following the demolition, a replacement building is proposed to be constructed on a different part of the site and to become a separate dwellinghouse. The proposed building would not seek to be an exact replica of the 19th century building, however would draw strong architectural influence from the previous coach house.

Situated on the ancient route which crosses Remenham Hill, the Five Horseshoes – historically ‘*The Horseshoes*’ or ‘*The Horseshoes Hotel*’ – was a purpose-built coaching inn built c.1830s. As the name implies the inn served the numerous coaches and their horses along the important London-Windsor-Henley-Benson-Oxford route. The inn evidently expanded with a purpose-built coach house c1850s, and another – now lost – structure to the west of the site – likely stabling. The Five Horseshoes continued its original function up until 1996 of which when it was converted into offices, subsequent to this further conversion to residential has been established.

The application proposes the demolition of the coach house as, effectively, it is inconveniently located within the site, thus allowing for the new dwelling to be

'better' sited in terms of parking, amenity space etc.. The building appears to be in good structural order and whilst not particularly well maintained in recent years continues to positively contribute to the significance of the host and Area of Special Character (ASC). As part of a different scheme, the principle of demolition has been established under application 213116.

Notwithstanding this previously established principle, the following points would be raised:

- Both the Five Horseshoes and the Coach House are identified as non-designated heritage assets (NDHA). The NDHA identification is based upon their age, architectural and historic interest as well as the positive contribution to the character and appearance to the ASC and to the setting of other heritage assets.
- Both NDHAs draw their significance from numerous perspectives, notably the architectural interest – fine flintwork, strong side chimney stacks, tripartite windows etc., but also the historic interest. This was a purpose-built coaching inn, serving not only locals but the passing traffic along this important route. By very definition, a coaching inn catered to coaches and their associated equine power sources. It follows that the coaches, horses, drivers, stable boys etc. all needed accommodation and facilities. The construction and thus use of separate coach house facilitated this need and therefore strongly contributes to the historic interest and ergo significance of the NDHA.
- Given this, taken individually, the proposed demolition of the Coach House would result in the equivalent to substantial harm through the total loss of the NDHA in respect to para. 216 of the NPPF. And, the equivalent of less-than-substantial harm to the significance of the host, the Five Horseshoes would occur through the loss of the associated coach house and thus a degree of the historic interest which contributes to its significance.

As has been noted in previous Built Heritage commentary, the loss of the Coach House is highly regrettable. The retention and conservation of historic buildings, particularly those which contribute to the significance of an area, is very important – to quote the NPPF, they are an “irreplaceable resource”. However, the recent planning history and established principle is recognised. It must, however, be noted this principle of demolition was accepted in relation to a different scheme, which allowed for different benefits. Given the identified harm to the NDHAs, as per para. 216 of the NPPF a balanced judgement must be taken in determining this application.

As harm to the heritage assets has been identified, an objection must be raised to the application.

With respect to the Level 2 Building Recording report which was previously undertaken and noted to be submitted to the Berkshire HER under an informative of application 213116, this does not appear to have been done, and thus it is advised the submission of this report by the applicant to the HER to mandated under *condition* of any grant planning permission.

Notwithstanding the above, commentary can be provided on the proposed replacement building. The new 'coach house' is very well considered both in overall form and detail, and – again, notwithstanding the above objection – such a level of consideration for a new building is welcomed. Whilst not a 1:1 replica, the proposed building undoubtedly has all the character of a traditional coach house, and whilst the siting is different, and thus inauthentic for this specific context, it may not be unexpected to have an associated coach house in this position and orientation in relation to the host. The application proposes high-quality traditional materials (which would, in any event, be conditioned) which again, is welcomed. The overall scale, massing and detailing are perfectly appropriate in relation to the host building and wider context, and thus – taken in isolation (for absolute clarity, in separate consideration to associated loss of the heritage assets) no concerns are raised to this element of the scheme.

With this in mind, whilst an objection is raised against the application from a heritage perspective. If minded to approve, the following conditions are advised to be attached to any grant of planning permission:

Conditions

Notwithstanding information shown on the approved drawings, no relevant works, or those above slab level, shall commence on site until details of materials and finishes have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. The submitted details should include physical samples as applicable. The works shall then proceed in strict accordance with the approved details. These requirements include provision of information relating to:

- 1. the material, size, texture, colour, profile, and source of facing brickwork and jointing mortar;*
- 2. the material, size, texture, colour, profile, and source of roofing materials;*
- 3. materials and finishes to be used in the detailing of valleys, hips, ridges, gables, parapets, eaves and verges;*
- 4. the proposed rainwater goods*

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural or historic interest of the building. Relevant policy: National Planning Policy Framework Section 16 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment) and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy TB24.

Notwithstanding, and in addition to, the information shown on the approved drawings, no relevant works shall commence on site until full working details of all windows and doors and related joinery, hereby approved, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details shall include annotated elevations, sections and plans which are referenced to the approved plans. These details shall illustrate the nature of materials

and finishes, framing elements, glazing, glazing units, glazing bars, and methods of opening. Drawings shall be at a minimum scale of 1:10 and with details at 1:5. The works shall then proceed in strict accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural or historic interest of the building. Relevant policy: National Planning Policy Framework Section 16 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment) and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy TB24.

A programme of recording of the Coach House is to be undertaken. This shall be to the equivalent of a Historic England Level 2 Building Record, as set out in 'Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice' (Historic England 2016). A report detailing the results of this record shall be submitted to Berkshire Historic Environment Record (HER) and the LPA prior to the commencement of any demolition work on site.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural or historic interest of the building. Relevant policy: National Planning Policy Framework Section 16 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment) and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy TB24.

Date:	15/04/2025	Signed:	Roderick McDonald Built Heritage Officer
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