

MEMORANDUM

From:	Built Heritage Officer		
Service	Green Infrastructure	App No:	241851
Address:	Poundgreen Farm, Grazeley Green Road, Grazeley, Wokingham, RG7 1LH		
Proposal:	Application for Listed Building consent for the proposed demolition of existing derelict concrete walls and erection of a fence and gates.		
Heritage Asset:	POUNDGREEN FARMHOUSE, POUNDGREEN – Grade II listed building Listed buildings along with conservation areas are classed as designated heritage assets under the NPPF (2023) and in the Council’s Local Plan policies.		
Site Visit Made:	No		

Summary Of Recommendations

No objection

Comments On Proposal

The application proposes the erection of post and rail fencing at Pound Green Farm, Grazeley as to allow for subdivision of the land and various built elements within the farmstead. The primary structure on the site is the grade II listed farmhouse, a much-altered 16th century hall house, with no other apparent historic structures remaining. The farmstead did contain an ancillary barn structure at an obtuse angle to the farmhouse, however this was demolished in the 1960s/70s although the position can still clearly be read. Other ancillary structures such as the stables, metal Dutch barn etc. are all post 1948 and thus not curtilage listed structures.

The erection of the fencing in itself does not require listed building consent as it does not physically attach the listed building. There remains a small element of brick walling, proposed to be removed to facilitate the fencing, this appears to be remnant of the lost barn structure. Given the relatively de minimis nature of the remnant it is uncertain whether this remaining piece of historic fabric would meet the legal tests of curtilage, thus require consent for removal. However, circumspection should be applied given this uncertain nature and thus as consent has been applied for the removal of this element, it should be determined as such.

As noted, the farmstead is much altered however is still read as both a historic farm and a working site. Many similar farms in the area have lost their (historic) function and converted to purely residential use. With that comes an over proliferation of domestic paraphernalia, associated structures and general 'neatening' of the vicinity which ultimately degrades the character and thus special interest of a historic – listed – farmstead. In this case, the farm – whilst having lost all historic structures (bar the farmhouse) – still retains a rudimentary agricultural character. Such character, and thus setting, contributes to the special interest of listed building, being a historic farmhouse, it is thus important to retain this character wherever possible. Sub-division of a farmstead is not unusual, in fact fairly common, where farmyards are divided for practical purposes (separation of livestock, areas to store crops/machinery/supplies etc.), although this (historically) was generally achieved with walling as opposed to fencing. However, simple post and rail fencing in itself is not particularly out of character with the rural vicinity. The proposed fencing runs along the line of the historic cart drive, and then turns directly to the north. This upper portion is not on any particular historic delineation, however this area, which was once just open pasture, has been much altered with the construction of the stables to the west and concrete pad adjacent to the barn to the east.

As such, no objection is raised to the proposals, given a relatively low impact upon the setting of the listed building in themselves – or more specifically within the scope of this application. The loss of any historic fabric is always regrettable, however given the existing walling is fairly small in area and whilst likely, it is not absolutely certain, this is a remnant of the lost barn. Thus, whilst an interesting piece of the site's history, it cannot be concluded to make palpable contribution to the special interest of the listed building, and as such the loss is accepted. However, it should be noted further alterations that arise as a consequence of the fencing may cause harm to the significance of the listed building. Specifically, sub-division of ownership, change of use and replacement structures etc.

As an addendum, it is understood post and rail style fencing constructed immediately to the rear of the farmhouse and along the line of the demolished historic barn does not benefit from planning permission. Clarification is sought as to the lawful status of this fencing and the compound impact of the proposed fencing upon this prior installed element.

Conditions

None suggested as the provided details in the submission are considered sufficient in terms of material and construction.

Date:	18/08/2024	Signed:	Roderick McDonald Built Heritage Officer
--------------	------------	----------------	---