

F/25/100141 – Land south of Kings Copse Avenue, Hedge End.

Context.

Lying to the south-east of Kings Copse Avenue on the edge of the built-up area this site is currently a green field in common with all the land to the east, south and west of the site, right down to the River Hamble and the Borough boundary.

The nearest listed buildings are that of The Thatched Cottage, Grade II to the north-west near the top of Freegrounds Road a little under 1km away, built in the early 19th. Century and The Church of St. John the Evangelist, also Grade II to the west in St. Johns Road a little over 1km, away built in 1874 by the Winchester architect John Colson. The nearest conservation areas are those of Botley to the east and Bursledon Windmill to the south-west and that side of the M27.

Both the listed buildings are separated from the site by extensive housing, so neither will have either their settings or the buildings themselves harmed by this development. The closest heritage asset is that of the south-western tip of the Botley Conservation Area which is just three small fields and hedges away to the east. Some of the intervening hedging contains mature trees and the nearest face of the conservation area is that of modern farm buildings on the west side of the historic Manor Farm farmstead containing a number of listed buildings, so is unlikely to cause this any harm.

The Proposal.

The layout consists of a cruciform road plan with a main avenue from the single entry point to the site and the blocks of flats centred on the crossover, then reducing in stature all around as one reaches the more rural boundaries of the site.

Two and three storey houses with pitched roofs are positioned around most of the perimeter of the site, which are partially masked by some new tree planting. The tallest are placed at the lowest part of the site, reminiscent of the fishermen's huts on Hastings beach in black, which helps them to recede visually. The four four-storey blocks of flats are placed toward the centre but slightly closer to Kings Copse Avenue than the rural eastern boundary, helping further to ameliorate their presence.

Conclusion.

While this development is unlikely to be seen from the listed buildings of Manor Farm and certainly not from the other two, the areas of dark cladding primarily in the north-east corner nearest the farm, are in sympathy with the tarred cladding of a number of them and the windmill, the dark roof finish will also help reduce the visual intrusion into the existing landscape. No objection.
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