



W M Egerton
Sutton Poyntz Neighbourhood Forum
Northdown Farmhouse
Sutton Road
Sutton Poyntz
Weymouth
DT3 6LW

3 October 2018

Dear Bill

Sutton Poyntz Neighbourhood Plan Heritage Assessment

I have read through the various comments and respond accordingly. I don't, however, appear to have received any comments from Ebenezer Cottage even though I have a letter from Rose Cottage and an email about Albert Cottage.

White Horse Cottage, White Horse Lane

This property was reconstructed on the same footprint as is shown on the tithe map but re-using the original materials. Even though it has historic origins, it has been substantially changed and there is now no reason to include it. The general rule would be to only consider buildings pre-dating WWII (1945). If the cock and hen boundary wall was built so recently that is testament to the good quality workmanship evident in the village some 25 years ago.

Staddles, Plaisters Lane

The report was drafted after consultation with the NP Steering Group Heritage sub-group who agreed the scope. The three missing criteria are those which were considered irrelevant to the study - namely archaeological interest, designed landscape interest and landmark status.

The reason for inclusion of Staddles in the assessment can be reinforced by the evidential significance of documents relating to Wamsley Lewis, in particular the 1972 letter (identified by Bill Egerton in the draft introduction to

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the Heritage Assessment) available from the Dorset History Centre D-WAL/A/6/1.

Staddles therefore **does** have archival interest as it was designed by a well-known and highly respected local architect (1898-1978) Ernest Wamsley-Lewis formed the Weymouth Civic Society in 1946 and became the first honorary secretary.

The additional criterion which is called Locally Distinctive Materials is actually the same as aesthetic interest as set out in the Historic England guidance "*Aesthetic interest – this criterion includes the use of locally distinctive materials and style.*" In this instance the insufficient detail can be expanded upon and the factually incorrect statement (about views) removed. It is clear that the owners do not regard their house as being special in any way, although according to the criteria of Historic England's Advice Note 7 it can be proven without a doubt that this building is a good example of a building by the notable architect Wamsley-Lewis.

This is not merely my own professional view, this is based on evidence of **all** the Sutton Poyntz Wamsley-Lewis houses which are considered as a very eclectic group, of the same materials and details - built within a 5 year period, probably by the same craftsmen. It is not my position to persuade any building owners that their house is more or less important - I am merely recording a statement of fact. Wamsley-Lewis houses are very highly regarded, not least by the Weymouth Civic Society.

Rose Cottage, Silver Street

It is entirely possible that all three, Rose, Ebenezer and Albert Cottages in the terrace are removed from the report if it is the strong belief of owners that they have no merit. However, to remove one or two would undermine the status of the remaining one or two – but that is my personal opinion, the Heritage sub-group may disagree.

Inappropriate and undemocratic heritage asset assessment criteria

The owner asks why we have not used the 10 assessment criterion commonly used by LPA's. I reiterate that the three missing criteria are those which were considered by the NP Steering Group Heritage sub-group as irrelevant to the study - namely archaeological interest, designed landscape interest and landmark status. The change of wording of *aesthetic interest* into locally distinctive materials and style was for a clear reason. Aesthetic interest, in my

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opinion is based on appreciation of vernacular buildings which evolve according to local needs, availability of construction materials, reflecting local traditions and rarely involve architects. Moreover, they are built by craftsman employing readily available materials, bricks from local brickworks, stone from quarries on the adjacent hillside, combed wheat reed (a by-product of threshing), water reed from Abbotsbury, lime mortar and render slaked in local lime kilns. It is what gives these buildings in the countryside a particular resonance with the cherished local scene, in the same way that thatched roofs meld into the landscape. The choice of materials used in construction contributes strongly to the appreciation of buildings and their subtle idiosyncrasies.

Lack of transparency in assessment scoring and lack of historic detail

Regarding the assessment criteria - there **is** a threshold for age - it is the same criteria used by the Secretary of A-State for the Department of Media Culture & Sport (advised by the designation team at Historic England) when they list buildings, Grade I, Grade II* and Grade II (only exceptional buildings post 1945 are listed). The other criteria comprise:

Architectural Interest. To be of special architectural interest a building must be of importance in its architectural design, decoration or craftsmanship; special interest may also apply to nationally important examples of particular building types and techniques (e.g. buildings displaying technological innovation or virtuosity) and significant plan forms;

Historic Interest. To be of special historic interest a building must illustrate important aspects of the nation's social, economic, cultural, or military history and/or have close historical associations with nationally important people. There should normally be some quality of interest in the physical fabric of the building itself to justify the statutory protection afforded by listing.

The suggestion that the assessment failed to meet the national guidance and the group's own objective is perhaps something for more detailed discussion at the meeting.

Rose Cottage appears on the tithe map (1838) as the end cottage in a row of three, so on that basis alone we know that dates from the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Its multi pane windows are a good indicator of date as is its construction with rubble walling in lime mortar. It is seen within the setting of Grade II listed building Laurel Cottage to the west. The group value is based on the evidence of these plots on the tithe map and also since Rose Cottage

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and its immediate neighbour share the same roof form, albeit the ridge detail differs. The cottage is constructed of materials distinctive to Sutton Poyntz and the South Dorset Ridgeway settlements. This is a statement of fact, stone was quarried locally and lime mortar slaked in kilns nearby. The only imported material is the slate from Wales which was readily available post the industrial revolution.

Added value is another subject for a more detailed discussion at the meeting.

Bellamy Cottage

It is taken as read that Elm Cottage must have existed for Eric Ricketts to have drawn it in 1977 so the fact that the cottage was radically rebuilt still means that it is worthy of inclusion. I note that the owners wish the Old Forge to be incorporated as a single entry with Bellamy Cottage, with which I agree.

Fox Cottage

On the evidence that has been submitted this property adjoining Springfield Cottage will be removed from the list. The fact that there were originally 3 properties in this row 55, 55A & 55B in the Apportionment reveals that they were separately leased and occupied at that time, the date of amalgamation into one is not known. The same criteria can be attributed to Fox Cottage as Bellamy Cottage, both date from the nineteenth century and both are built of stone and thatch but obviously less of the original fabric survives in Fox Cottage than the Bellamy Cottage. The windows are quite convincing double-glazed replacements for UPVC as usually the corner junctions are mitred, albeit under concrete lintels. It is for this reason that Fox Cottage should be removed from the report.

Albert Cottage

The definition of a heritage asset from the Glossary of the NPPF is:

'A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).'

Examples of designated heritage assets include listed buildings, scheduled monuments, wrecks, battlefields, world heritage sites and conservation areas.

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What we are dealing with in this exercise is ‘*local listing*’, that is non-designated heritage assets, which is the terminology commonly used by heritage sector. Paragraph 197 of the National Planning Policy Framework states ‘*The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application.*’

Local lists are usually compiled by the local authority when they carry out an appraisal of their conservation areas (one does not exist for Sutton Poyntz), but the opportunity has arisen under the Neighbourhood Plan for the village to carry out this task. The selection of ‘Important Local Buildings’ can comprise groups or individual buildings which have architectural or historic interest.

With regard to the existing protection offered to buildings in a conservation area, this local listing does not necessarily increase that already established protection, as any development in the conservation area would need to consider in a written heritage statement how the proposals would impact its significance. Applications for planning permission are required to justify how the development would preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The row of three properties comprises a group of cottages with gardens, they appear on the tithe map as a continuous row of six, three of which have been demolished. Albert Cottage may be very different from its neighbours however they are all constructed from a variety of traditional materials and have their origins in the early nineteenth century. It is possible that it was rebuilt but it still shares characteristics with Ebenezer Cottage and Rose Cottage.

Springhead Hotel and Pavilion

Springhead was designed by the highly regarded local architect George Crickmay whose practice still exists in Dorchester today as John Stark and Crickmay. It is said that Thomas Hardy started his training as an architect in Crickmay’s office. The origins of the Springhead are well documented in Kelly’s directory and therefore it cannot be disputed that it has historic interest. The fact that the building is in a conservation area already affords it some protection in planning terms and it could be argued that its status as a non-designated heritage asset is trumped by this conservation area status.

It is not my place to persuade or dissuade building owners to embrace the findings of the report. It is merely intended as an appendix to the Neighbourhood Plan to demonstrate the evidence base for a local list and this

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is still very much a discussion document not a finite piece of research. The ownership of the NP belongs to those who live in the village and they must decide what is important in the cherished scene and what is not.

Chipps Cottage

Chipps Cottage was considered and not included for the reason that it has been substantially altered, but if the owners want this building to be reconsidered together with Southview, this is indeed possible.

Wyndings, Plaisters Lane

Archaeology was excluded as a criterion since the Neighbourhood Plan heritage assessment only deals with the built heritage. The decision making (as I have already stated) was made by a group – it was not the case that any one individual assessed the village and compiled the final short list. It was a joint exercise and I feel that perhaps the strategy and the basis on which this assessment was undertaken could have been shared more widely with the village in a public forum rather than as a complete piece of work. The background to the study which may not be common knowledge was as a consequence of the South Dorset Ridgeway Partnership Project between the Heritage Lottery Fund and The AONB Team that structures and features of value in Sutton Poyntz were evaluated in May 2018.

If Wyndings is to be included in the adopted heritage assessment then perhaps the owners would like to share their photographic evidence at the public meeting tomorrow.

Conclusion

I confirm my attendance at a public meeting in the Springhead on Thursday 4 October at 11.30am for one hour to address the owners and to hear their objections first hand. In the meantime, you may consider that the best way forward is to just remove those properties (identified above) where a handful of villagers have voiced very clear objections to the list of locally important buildings.

Yours sincerely

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