

Carney, Helena

From: Alison Whalley <Alison@rawplanning.co.uk>
Sent: 16 December 2025 14:51
To: Carney, Helena
Subject: PL/2025/08855 : Land adjacent to Truant House, Church Lane, Froxfield, SN8 3JY
Attachments: View from Church door today.JPG
Importance: High

Hi Helena,

Hope you're well. I have seen the supportive comments regarding the application and there are no objections from archaeology, tree officer, ecology or drainage. Are you expecting a response from the conservation officer?

With regards to the comments from Historic England on the application for the new dwelling adjacent to Truant House. Whilst we haven't discussed the application with you yet, I just wanted to contact you as I think the officer at H.E is looking at the old 2007 Conservation Area Appraisal, which identified a south-easterly view from the churchyard across the site. However, as shown in both the Planning, Design and Access Statement and the Desk Based Archaeological Assessment, that view simply no longer exists. The large, dense laurel hedge that has grown up since the appraisal completely blocks any outward view from the churchyard, and equally prevents any view back towards the church from the application site. On page 14 of the 2007 Conservation Area, it shows a view from the church at that time, but as you can see from the attached photograph "View from the Church Doo today", the view is now completely blocked by trees and the laurel hedge.

Here is the opposite view with the image taken in March 2008, versus today where the view is obscured.





I have discussed the comments with our heritage consultant, and he is concerned that Historic England has not read the setting assessment in the DBA. Their comment seems to imply that change per se is harmful, rather than considering whether this specific proposal actually affects the significance of the Grade II* church. The rural backdrop is only part of the church's setting and the church's relationship with the village it serves is just as important. The application site reads as part of that village context rather than open countryside. The view of the church from Church Lane (or within the churchyard) would not change because the proposed dwelling is 1.5 storeys, set on lower land than the church and is screened by the large laurel hedge.

The proposed development does not interfere with any meaningful view or understanding of the church, and will not harm the aesthetic qualities of the setting and therefore the scheme results in no heritage harm. This was also the opinion put forward by the conservation officer at the pre-application stage. We consider that formalising the existing church parking in fact improves the immediate approach to the church.

Please could you kindly reconsult with Historic England with this clarification, and asking them to reconsider their position in light of the evidence submitted?

Many thanks, and do let me know if it would help for me to talk this through with you or with the conservation officer.

Kind regards,

Alison

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