

Bexhill Heritage

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Caring for Bexhill's past,
present and future.

Dear Ms Edwards

Re: Planning Application RR/2017/1705/P - SPINDLEWOOD DEVELOPMENT

Further to our letter of objection of 19th March 2018 we should like to develop our objection as follows on the amended application.

Specifically in relation to the gate posts and walls on the Barnhorne Road frontage, we make the following further observations:

- The site entrance plan shows no indication of the gateposts and curved walls. Given their significance in the street scene and their references to the historic listed building, it should. This omission suggests a worrying lack of interest on the part of the applicants and should be remedied.
- The site entrance plan is dated November 16 and is rather inaccurately entitled "Spindlewood Drive Access". There is no written reference to Barnhorn Road. Even allowing for the fact that the access leads to Spindlewood Drive, the public at large may be sufficiently misled by this to render the plan confusing and unacceptable as part of a planning application. This should be remedied.
- Given that the new access road will lead towards the listed building Barnhorne Manor, the application should even at this stage, be accompanied by a plan showing how the road and footpath will be so designed as to reduce its impact on the setting of the listed buildings.

Our strong objection on these points remains until or unless satisfactory responses are provided by the applicant.

In relation to the unique historical and architectural significance of Barnhorne Manor and its associated buildings, we should like to bring the following to your attention:

- Barnhorne Manor is the oldest building in Bexhill for which there is an historical record. Hence the date 772 on the curved entrance walls fronting on to Barnhorn Road.
- Barnhorne Manor, Lower Barnhorn has medieval origins with Tudor and, later, Georgian and Victorian additions. We have outlined both its historical and architectural significance in our application to Heritage England to have its listing upgraded from 2 to 2*. This application is attached.
- The farm buildings and particularly the Tudor cowshed, continue to support the work of a dairy farm. The farmyard has remained unchanged for 120 years and offers a very important insight into the workings of a Victorian farm. Moreover, this land has enjoyed agricultural use since at least 772 AD. If the adjacent fields are sacrificed for development, then the farm and former manor will be stripped of context for the first time in well over a thousand years.

It seems that the historical significance of this site has been underplayed by the local authority in its Local Plan and, less surprisingly, by the applicant whose agent has carried out only a rudimentary archaeological survey. By using only a metal detector, the applicant's agent will have missed any stone, pottery or organic artefacts of historical significance. We therefore strongly suggest that a thorough survey be required by the planning authority in accordance with paragraph 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

We believe that, should this application be approved, there will be a total loss of significance for this unique local heritage asset. The manor site and its historic farmyard will no longer have meaning unless the adjacent fields are retained. Paragraph 133 of the National Planning Policy Framework calls on planning authorities to 'refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss ...'.

While Bexhill Heritage accepts that more housing is urgently required in East Sussex, we oppose the development of this particular site. The short-term public benefit of allowing development is massively outweighed by the potential evisceration of this whole site's significance and meaning. We therefore strongly oppose this application.

Yours sincerely