

4. Built Heritage

- 4.1. This section seeks to address the comments made by the Conservation Officer on 8 February 2024. This response identified within the conclusions that:

“The proposals will cause some harm to the designated heritage assets at Mussenden Farm complex (Mussenden Farmhouse (list entry no. 1239065), Granary to the east of Mussenden Farmhouse (list entry no. 1274006), barn to the south east of Mussenden Farmhouse (listed

entry no. 1273866), and Barn to the north of Mussenden Farmhouse fronting road (list entry no. 1238795)) through change within their setting. This harm will require clear and convincing justification and be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal (NPPF paras 206 and 208)."

4.2. Clarity was sought on the level of harm that the Conservation Officer was referring to on the less than substantial harm spectrum in reference to impacts on the designated heritage assets at Mussenden Farm. It was then confirmed in correspondence on 20 February 2024 that the comments conclude that the aforementioned 'some harm' would be less than substantial harm (NPPF para 208). The Conservation Officer did not go into further clarification on the level of harm within the less than substantial harm spectrum.

4.3. In the submitted Heritage Statement (dated 23/10/2023) it is concluded at paragraph 7.15 that, *"the proposed development within the site will result in less than substantial harm at the low end of the spectrum to the heritage significance of the Grade II Listed Buildings at Mussenden Farmhouse, comprising Mussenden Farmhouse, the Barn to North, Barn to South-East and Granary to East, via a change to setting."*

4.4. In terms of assessment of substantial harm, the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) confirms that whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgement for the individual decision taken having regard to the individual circumstances and the policy set out in the NPPF. It goes on to state:

"In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. It is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed. The harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting." (our emphasis)

4.5. With regards to the impacts of the development on the designated heritage assets at Mussenden Farm, it should be noted that:

- The red line has been purposefully set back a suitable distance from the built form along Mussenden Lane and Horton Kirby, as heritage was identified as a key constraint from the outset of the project:
 - Due south from Mussenden Farm / Oast House = circa 315m to redline boundary (with 5m native woodland planting with fence line and internal track circa 5m beyond); and
 - Due southeast along Mussenden Lane from Oast House = circa 238m (with 5m native woodland planting with fence line and internal track circa 5m beyond).
- The main elevation of Mussenden Farmhouse faces broadly north and fronts onto Mussenden Lane, although there are views from the side and rear elevation which include views across the site, seen in association with expansive agricultural land not included within the site boundary, as seen in the marked-up photography. The other assets at Mussenden Farm were originally constructed as barns / granaries and therefore any views to / from them with formerly associated agricultural land is considered to be incidental, rather than designed views.



- Views in the direction of the site from Mussenden Farmhouse comprise expansive agricultural land not included within the site boundary, as seen in the marked-up photography (included at Appendix 3).
- There is a historic functional association between some of the land within the site and the assets at Mussenden Farm, although this has been severed as all of the site is farmed as part of Speedgate Farm and Mussenden Farm is no longer in use as a farm complex.
- We do conclude that the land within the site makes a minor contribution to the heritage significance of the assets (through setting) at Mussenden Farm, as formerly associated agricultural land which allows the historic rural setting of the assets to be understood and which still has some intervisibility.
- The proposed development will not impact those elements of the setting of the assets which principally contribute to the asset's significance through setting, comprising their garden plots, the legibility of the former farmyard, views from Mussenden Lane and the historically associated agricultural land located in the immediate vicinity of the assets.

4.6. A response to the application was received from the Oast House property which lies to the north of the Mussenden Farm complex. It should be noted that the Oast House is not a designated heritage asset and it does not lie within the Mussenden Farm complex. It is located in closer proximity to the site and is not considered to truly reflect views out from the farmhouse.

4.7. Whilst it is accepted that there is anticipated to be some harm to the heritage significance of the assets at Mussenden Farm through changes to setting and have noted that this will be a low level of harm. As confirmed by the conservation officer dated 20/02/2024, this is considered to be less than substantial. This harm should be weighed up against the public benefits of the scheme as detailed at Section 13 of this report.

Appendix 3



Closest distance is 238m to the redline. Native woodland planting will be in foreground and therefore panels will be screened.

Land in the foreground will continue to be farmed and rotated through crops with skylark plots

Furthest distance circa 1350m

Solar Tables - fixed tilt and south facing

Native Woodland Planting on NW boundary of Chimmens Solar Farm

Closest distance to redline circa 315m from where this image has been taken