

SITE OF THE RISE AND THREE NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES, STANFORD HILL, LYMINGTON SO41 8DE

SUMMARY OF PROOF OF EVIDENCE

PINS Ref: APP/B1740/W/20/3265937 - LPA Ref: 20/10481

In summary the submitted proof sets out my clear opinion on the two reasons for refusal and the issues raised by this proposal.

With regard to the refusal relating to heritage reasons and setting the heritage assets affected are identified and the significance of those assets defined throughout the proof. The proof sets out how that setting contributes to that significance and then how the proposal causes harm by its impacts upon those factors. I have also balanced the combined heritage significance of the edge of town site, the conservation area and the setting of adjacent listed buildings, group value and found this area to be of important significance for the reasons set out above. The proof of evidence sets out how this site currently contributes to defining the significance of the conservation area and also the setting and outlook of the listed buildings. It is felt that this setting is intrinsic to significance and the current site helps to better reveal these heritage assets. This is underpinned by the NPPF and expanded upon through guidance provided by Historic England. At a local level advice and guidance is set out both in the Lymington Conservation Area Appraisal and the Lymington Local Distinctiveness Supplementary Planning Document. Through the above assessment the authority finds that the proposed development due to its scale, mass, position and height in a key location would harm the significance of the conservation area, the identified listed buildings. This harm to the designated heritage assets should be given considerable importance and great weight to an assets conservation.

My opinion under the tests set out in NPPF is a finding of less than substantial harm to the significance of the listed buildings and the conservation area and this gives rise to a strong presumption against planning permission being granted. It is felt that the significance is high within this context for the reasons given within the proof. I would suggest that the level of harm in this case would be judged to be medium. The presumption against planning permission is a statutory one and I am conscious of the statutory presumption in favour of preservation, which should demonstrably apply to this proposal.

Turning to the issues of townscape, design and local distinctiveness. I have set out within the proof how this development causes harm and conflicts with the prevailing character and townscape of the area in which it sits. I have defined where the local authority has set out a clear commitment to good design and responding to local distinctiveness and the design policies set out in its development framework, The Lymington Local Distinctiveness Supplementary Planning Guidance and the overarching high quality design aim of the NPPF. For the comprehensive reasons set out in this proof I feel that the scheme does not respond to these factors. Indeed, I feel the scheme moves so far away from the prevailing character, context and adopted guidance for Area 6 at this point it is felt to have a significantly damaging effect on those local attributes due to its combined issues of scale, mass, position and height in this key location. This has been assessed under the guidance set out within the National Design Guidance. I feel that the scheme is in conflict with the clear advice set out within the NPPF and defined at paragraph 130 in relation to achieving well design places. My opinion is that the proposed development is of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of this area.

In my professional view I feel strongly that with regard to the above reasons the appeal should be dismissed for the two key reasons set out above.

Warren Lever - BSc (Hons) Cons, PG Dip UD MRICS, IHBC