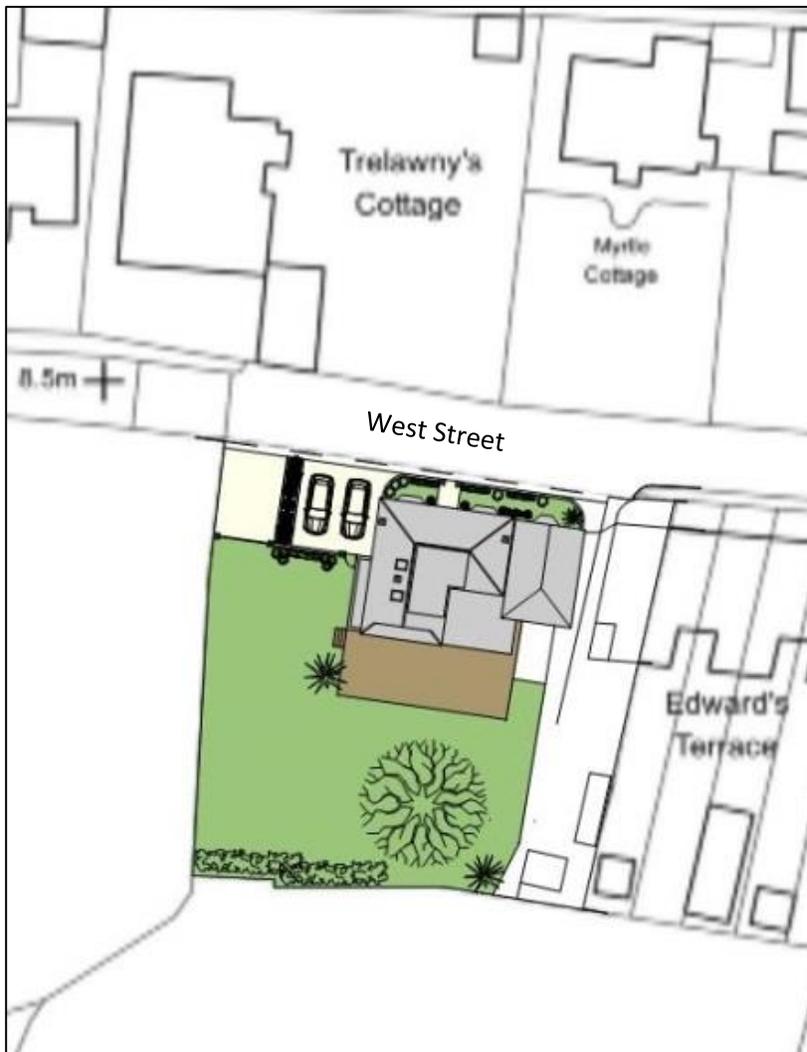


Heritage Statement – 15/10/2025

The Gardeners Arms, West Street, Sompting, Worthing, West Sussex, BN15 0AR



Visible proposals – garden/frontage walling and external repair work/painting



INTRODUCTION:

The building no longer operates as a public house and has been purchased by the current owner/applicant. It is currently vacant at ground floor level with occasional use by the owner for storage etc. The first floor provides current accommodation for the owner within the existing flat. The building is understood to have no listing status, but is situated in the Conservation Area on West Street in Sompting. The rear garden and side parking area is accessed from the existing West Street entrance and features a raised deck area, previously used for patrons of the public house. The application requests consent to convert the property into a private family dwelling with large garden area to the rear and parking to the front/side all as per plans submitted. Whilst the property is not listed, it sits within the Sompting conservation area (within village to south)

HISTORIC:

(General information from the 'Sompting Conservation Area Appraisal)

With the creation of the South Downs National Park Authority in April 2011, it became the Local Planning Authority for that part of the Conservation Area to the north of the A27, with Adur District Council remaining the planning authority for the village south of the A27.

The village of Sompting sits on the dip slope of the South Downs at the westerly edge of the district of Adur, where it abuts the National Park, and separated from Worthing some three miles south-west by an open green gap.

The old boundaries of the parish were broadly considered to run as far east as Boundstone Lane and to the west as far as Charmandean Lane.

Today, the village is severed by the A27, with the northern part of the village sitting within the South Downs National Park boundary and extending into the grassland slopes of the Downs, and the southern half of the village within the developed coastal plains of Adur. East of the conservation area is the modern village of Sompting, incorporating the surviving elements of Cokeham, which in turn merges with Lancing.

The southern part of the parish was once part of the tidal estuary of the Broadwater and Sompting brook, and the name 'Sompting' is reputedly derived from the marshy characteristics of the land. The land rises gently to a low plateau where the historic villages of Sompting and Cokeham lie, before rising more steeply up the chalk downland to altitudes of 400-500 feet at Park Brow, some two miles north of Sompting.

Prehistoric, Romano-British and Bronze Age field systems have been recorded here.

The Sompting Conservation Area boundaries on either side of the A27 are shown below. South of the A27 it comprises the mainly residential part of the village west of Church Lane along West Street as far as Lambleys Lane which encloses Upton Farm. North of the A27 it incorporates the Church of St Mary and Sompting Abbotts School, along with the intervening buildings along the northern part of Church Lane. The boundaries of Sompting Conservation Area. It should be noted that the carriageway of the A27 is excluded from the Conservation Area. These boundaries have been in place since 1992 and no amendments are proposed in this appraisal.

South of the A27, Sompting is a linear village, running west from Church Lane to Upton Farm in the west. South of the village is a diminishing wedge of open land stretching to the coast, allowing glimpsed views across the tidal plains from parts of the village. East and west of the conservation area are open fields associated with the farms of the present-day Sompting Estate. These provide an important rural context to the village otherwise now encroached upon by the expansion of Lancing to the east and Worthing to the west.

Views within the conservation area itself are generally close, or kinetic as one moves through the narrow and sinuous streets of Church Lane, and West Street. These townscape views provide a sense of the overall character of the village, and the architectural qualities of it. In the southern character area, there are some attractive views across fields to the south as the buildings become more dispersed at the west end of West Street.

The southern part of the conservation area comprises two streets: the southern section of Church Lane and leading west from it, West Street. The streets are linear, mostly residential, with several terraces that once housed the agricultural workers of the Sompting Estate, or the market garden industry.

Church Lane south of the A27 is characterised on the west side by buildings of various ages, ranging from the 18th and 19th centuries to modern infill development. To the east, and on higher ground are the fields belonging to Yew Tree Farm. Church Lane terminates at its southern end with the site of the former Marquis of Granby pub, which dated from the 1930s and was itself a rebuild on the site of an older Inn. This has recently been demolished and has been replaced by a residential development which takes some inspiration from the form and materials of the 1930s building. At the junction of Church Lane and West Street, is a mini roundabout, encircled by development of varying ages and quality including modern terraces, the new residential unit and 19th century buildings.

Immediately north of West Street are the tall flint walls associated with the old market garden industry. The spaces they enclose are inaccessible, and at the time of survey, are used for grazing horses. West Street is at the eastern end a linear village of continuous, fairly tight knit development on both sides of the street. West of the Gardeners Arms, the southern side of the street is enclosed either by characteristic flint walls or mixed

native hedgerows and there is a looser agricultural building pattern allowing views across the fields of the tidal plain. On the north side of West Street at its western end are terraces of various ages and quality. Along its length within the conservation area, West Street is narrow with an intermittent foot-way on either side, and buildings with short front gardens often sit hard on the road. Upton Farm (grade II listed) at the western end of the conservation area is undoubtedly the finest of the buildings within this character area, and it retains its agricultural setting. The flint boundary walls are an important unifying feature within this character area, even where modern, or fragmentary. Terraced housing, of varying designs and quality, is a significant feature of the southern character area. They are largely 19th or early 20th century in date and often accommodated workers in the horticultural industry

*The loss of traditional architectural features and traditional materials has been identified as an issue which is harming the character of the **southern part of the Conservation Area**. In particular, most of the original windows and doors to historic buildings within the southern character area have been lost and have frequently been exchanged for uPVC or historically inaccurate replacements.*

Proposal:

The proposed works which would be required to facilitate the conversion to a dwelling are visually minimal to the front elevation.

The applicant proposes no construction-based changes to the property frontage, but would carry out refurbishment and/or like-for-like replacement of any windows in poor-repair, general re-painting works and low walling to provide a shallow front garden in keeping with the adjacent terraced properties – such changes all designed to improve and enhance the frontage/street-scene.

The existing vehicular access would be retained and enhanced to provide planting and a structured parking area for 2-3 vehicles.

Also forming part of the conversion works would be minor window/door changes to the side and rear elevations together with a loft conversion comprising a half-gable addition to the rear hipped roof and a side/rear dormer. The rear dormer would not be visible from the road/streetscene and the small half-gable only barely visible looking from the west of the property.

The existing train carriage has been inspected and is considered not repairable for any suitable usage at this time. It is proposed that the carriage would be reduced by approximately 2/3 in length during the works with a view to considering refurbishment/re-use at a later stage.

Summary:

The proposals seek to convert the site from commercial use (public house) into a detached, five bedroom family home suitable for the new owner's (applicant) residential use.

Such conversion would not require any major changes to the street view elevation of the property – only cosmetic and repair works. Some hard and soft landscaping details have been included which would offer both parking enhancement and further visual, in-keeping improvements to the street-scene.

The existing character and visual appearance of the property would be retained and enhanced as part of the proposals, thereby not affecting the historic merits of West Street and the 'street-scene' in general. Any historical features and features/materials of architectural merit would be unaffected and repaired where needed with such requirements being agreed via any planning conditions attached to planning consent if granted.

The main proposed construction works are to the roof only and designed to be minimally or completely non-visible from West Street.

The visible hard-landscaping would facilitate off-street parking to the advantage of West Street and would also enhance the frontage whilst screening off the rear garden space (currently visible as a large, bare parking area formerly serving the public house)

Proposals are therefore considered to relate favourably to the relevant sections of the Planning Act 1990 - Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas and to offer a purely positive impact on the area. There have been no negative impacts on local designated heritage assets or surroundings which could be considered detrimental to consent being granted in this instance.