

## Summary Proof of Evidence on Heritage.

### Evidence of Gail Stoten.

In Respect of Section 78 Appeal: Land at Tollgate Road, Colney Heath.

Outline application (access sought) – Demolition of existing house and stables and the construction of up to 150 dwellings including affordable and self-build and custom-build dwellings together with all ancillary works

On behalf of Vistry Group Strategic Land.

Date: August 2023 | Pegasus Ref: P23-0990

LPA Ref: 5/2022/1988

Author: Gail Stoten BA(Hons) MCifA FSA

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# 1. Summary

- 1.1. My name is Gail Stoten. I am an Executive Director at Pegasus Planning Group. I am a Member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (MCIfA). I have been elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London. I have a First Class Honours degree in Archaeology and I have been a heritage professional for 23 years. I am a Trustee of Painswick Rococo Gardens.
- 1.2. The significance and setting heritage of assets in the vicinity of the site has been considered, with these comprising the Grade II Listed Colney Heath Farmhouse, Grade II Listed Barn, the Grade I Listed Mymms Park House and non-designated parkland, and the non-designated Tollgate Farm. This analysis is presented in the Heritage Statement of Common Ground.
- 1.3. With regards to Colney Heath Farmhouse and Barn, following the proposed development, all elements of the setting of the assets which principally contribute to their significance will remain, comprising the other buildings of the complex, curtilages, settlement and key areas of adjacent pasture most visible in views from, to and with the assets. As such, the harm is considered to be less than substantial and at the lowermost end of the spectrum.
- 1.4. With regards to North Mymms Park House, the principal element of setting which contributes to the significance of the asset is the parkland and features within it. Consideration has been made of the evolution of the parkland, and no designed views or areas of 'borrowed' wider landscape have been identified. There may once have been views north-west to a lake and island, but the Tithe Map on which these features are first shown suggests they had a backdrop of plantation planting. Earlier views in this direction, down the valley, appear to have been defined by a now-removed hedge flanked road, and later views were enclosed by tree belts. As such, the wider surrounds of the parkland make a minimal contribution to the significance of the house and the parkland itself.
- 1.5. The anticipated visibility of the proposed scheme from the house can only be described as minimal on point of construction and in a section of the view which has an existing backdrop of built form (see photomontages). This minimal initial visibility appears only to be the result of incidental tree loss around the boundaries, and there do not appear to have been designed views in this direction historically. At year 15, the development will be screened by vegetation, and the minimal visual impact will be resolved.
- 1.6. The small reduction in separation between the parkland and Colney Heath will be little perceived from the house and parkland, and intervening pastoral land will remain open in character.
- 1.7. Overall, the impact to the Grade I Listed house is considered to be less than substantial and at the lowermost end of the spectrum. The impact to the heritage significance of the parkland is considered to be very minor.
- 1.8. With regards to Tollgate Farm, whilst it is recorded on the HER although I do not consider that this necessarily engenders a level of significance to the asset. The farm is recorded on early and mid 19th-century map sources, but the farm buildings within the complex appear undistinguished and the farmhouse appears rebuilt. It is considered to have minimal heritage value. The site is largely screened from the core of the farm by modern silos and



barns, and intervening vegetation. Any contribution of the site to heritage significance would be very minor. The proposed development would result in very minor harm, at most.

- 1.9. All levels of harm to heritage assets are now agreed with the LPA and no substantive areas of dispute remain.
- 1.10. It is agreed common ground with the LPA that the public benefits of the scheme outweigh the heritage harm it would cause.

Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)  
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

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