

**From:** Emily Wade <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 20 August 2025 15:59:58 UTC+01:00  
**To:** "Catherine Cardin" <Catherine.Cardin@midsussex.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Stonehurst, North Lodge DM/25/1533

Hi Catherine

Comments on the above planning application. My apologies for the delay in getting these to you, which has been caused by pressure of other work and a period of leave.

Stonehurst is a substantial country house located in a rural position to the north of Ardingly. The building itself is unlisted, but is regarded with its ancillary garden and estate buildings as a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA), and the gardens within which it is set are part of an extensive Grade II listed registered park and garden.

The house at Stonehurst was constructed c.1910 to a design by architect Norman Searle for client John Stewart, on the site of an earlier farmhouse, Stone Farm. The building is in a loosely Arts and Crafts style, with brick and hung tile elevations, with mock timbering to gables, and slate roofs. Originally, the house had a large conservatory wrapping around the south east corner of the building, as well as a tall central tower with a balcony providing views over the surrounding landscape. These features have both been lost, although the base of the tower remains.

The gardens and pleasure grounds around the house were laid out in 1907 to a design by Thomas H. Mawson, with further input from Norman Searle. The formal gardens around the house and the pleasure grounds beyond these are very extensive, particularly to the north and west, extending to incorporate the valley of the Cob Brook and a tributary, mill ponds and woodlands, and also originally retaining some historic buildings including two mills and associated mill cottages. The formal gardens immediately around the house include a series of brick walled enclosures, with buildings incorporated into the walls including an observatory and viewing bastion, as well as a terrace with flanking tea pavilions which extends along the eastern side of the house. Below this terrace are lawns which descend towards the pleasure grounds in the wooded valley below, which are now in separate ownership.

The estate buildings which would be included with the house as part of the NDHA include the subjects of the current proposal, North Lodge, which is located a short distance to the north of the house, adjacent to the entrance driveway and attached to a gateway to the house forecourt, and an adjacent garage block, which was originally a combination of stables and garages, but has been converted entirely to garaging at ground floor. The North Lodge is mirrored by a second, South Lodge, which is just to the south of the house. Originally, these buildings, which are contemporaneous with the house, guarded the two ends of a crescent shaped carriage driveway as it emerged onto Selsfield Road. North Lodge was extended to the east c.1900.

The current proposal is for alterations and extensions to North Lodge and the adjacent garaging, comprising construction of an infill extension between the two, conversion of an existing garage bay into habitable accommodation at ground and first floor, a new conservation style rooflight, replacement garage doors, new fenestration and installation of solar PV panels. It is also proposed to relocate an existing oil tank, install a new air source heat pump (ASHP), and replace existing paving to the area in front of the garage with gravel.

To consider these works in turn:

- The proposed infill extension is to an existing small courtyard area between the North Lodge and the adjacent garage building. The originally larger gap between the buildings appears to have been incrementally infilled, as extensions to the domestic accommodation at North Lodge, during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The current proposal relates to the remaining open area to the east, and is for introduction of a part lead, part glazed roof over the area, contained behind the existing wall which encloses the yard to its eastern side, which is to be raised in height. Although the loss of this remaining yard area will reduce the surviving sense of separation between the two buildings of the Lodge and stable block, the proposed partly glazed lodge will preserve some sense of openness, and the retention of the existing brick wall to the east will reduce the visual impact of the works in external views. I would however like to see further detail of the method of raising the height of this wall, which I would suggest should be done in brick to match- the elevations provided are somewhat ambivalent on this point and possibly suggest a deep lead fascia? I also note the points made within the submitted Heritage Statement regarding associated works to doorways, and would suggest that these recommendations are implemented (10.1.13 and 10.1.15).
- The conversion of the garage bay to residential use is not contentious in principle, in my opinion, in built heritage terms. Please see below with respect to the associated works to the garage doors and fenestration.
- The proposed new rooflight is to one of the inward-facing roof slopes of the triple-pitched roof to the garage block. This will have minimal impact on the appearance of the building, and is not considered contentious in principle, however I note and agree with the suggestion made within the submitted Heritage Statement at 10.2.6 regarding the positioning of the rooflight to avoid or minimise damage to original fabric.
- The existing garage doors to the garage block are modern, and are not sympathetic in design or materials to their context. The proposal to replace them is not therefore considered contentious in principle. The submitted proposed elevations suggest glazed garage doors to all openings save the southernmost, which would receive what appear to be fixed full height windows relating to the proposed residential accommodation to this space. Whilst this is an unconventional treatment in terms of garage doors, and I would wish to see further details of the units proposed, to include method of opening, given the unsympathetic nature of the existing doors I do not think an objection in principle could be sustained. With respect to the southernmost opening, I would suggest

that the base or plinth below the proposed window insert is treated differently from the adjacent brickwork to indicate that this was previously a full height opening. Timber boarding or possibly a small area of render of an appropriate colour might be possible alternatives.

- It is proposed to replace the existing windows throughout with double glazed timber framed casements. The loss of original windows is regrettable, and I would recommend that if possible the applicant consider retaining the existing casements with slim-line double glazing retro-fitted within the existing frames. If the condition of the existing windows prevents their retention, I would suggest that an appropriate justification should be made in terms of a brief condition statement. We would expect to see further details in either case, although this could be by condition. Replacement windows, if justified, should include functional glazing bars. It is also proposed to install a new three-light oriel casement window to the currently blank east facing gable above the stable block. Whilst I do not think that the principle of this alteration is contentious given the presence of similar features elsewhere to the building, I have some concerns about the scale and visual prominence of the window as shown, and I would suggest it is reduced from a three-light to a two-light window. I would also suggest that the glazing pattern of the casements is amended to match the multi-pane windows elsewhere to the building. The addition of an obscure glazed window to the upper part of the loading bay door to the attic level of the western side of the building is also not considered contentious, but again I would recommend that the design of the window is amended to match those elsewhere including the existing part glazed door further north to this same elevation.
- The proposed solar PV panels are located to the inward (east) facing roof slope of the western pitched roof to the northern part of the stables building. In principle, the installation of PV panels would not be considered contentious, but I would suggest that to avoid potential impact on views of the building from the entrance driveway and from its immediate setting to the north, that the northernmost panels are resited to the east facing roof slope of the central pitched roof, towards its southern end.
- The proposed ASHP is sited against the western wall of the Lodge, facing onto the brick boundary wall with Selsfield Road. This is a discrete location, and the unit should not impact on the more important views of the Lodge. This aspect of the proposal is therefore not considered contentious.
- The proposal to resurface the external area in gravel would involve the loss of the existing paved surface, which is in a poor state of repair. Whilst its replacement is not considered contentious in principle, I have some concerns regarding the loss of the manner in which this paving currently demarcates the 'working' area to the frontage of the garage (and former stables) building. There is no particular comment in the submitted Heritage Statement regarding the historic finish to this area, which may be impossible to determine, but I would suggest that this aspect of the proposal is given further consideration, particularly as historical maps suggest that this was from c.1900 (when the lodge house was extended and the gateway added) until the mid-late 20<sup>th</sup> century (possibly until the point at which the current modern entrance driveway from the north was

added), an enclosed yard, demarcated by the gateway to the south and a wall or walls to the north. It may be that replacement paving or setts of some form would be a more appropriate treatment to this area, to continue to express its differentiation from the domestic forecourt to the south, and the modern driveway to the north.

In summary, while the principle of the proposals is not considered contentious, several areas require further information and/or revision, to ensure that the significance of the NDHA and the special interest of the registered Park and Garden are preserved.

Thanks,

Emily

Please note that this advice is given at Officer level only and is without prejudice to the formal decision of the District Council.

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Submit your planning application online.  
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Emily Wade Ma MSc  
Conservation Officer  
Planning Services  
Tel: +44 (0)1444 477385  
[emily.wade@midsussex.gov.uk](mailto:emily.wade@midsussex.gov.uk)    <http://www.midsussex.gov.uk>



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