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Sent: 02 September 2026 10:21:09 UTC+01:00
To: "Deborah Lynn" <Deborah.Lynn@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: DM/26/1560 Land rear of The Byre, The Street, Bolney

Hi Debbie

Comments on the above planning application.

The application site is a field to the west of The Street in Bolney. It is located to the rear of The Byre, which is a converted former agricultural building forming part of the Dalton's Farm historic farmstead. The former farmhouse, which is just to the north of The Byre, is a Grade II listed building dating from the 18th century or earlier (from the list description).

Based on the information in front of us, Daltons Farmhouse is likely to be considered to possess architectural value based on its design, construction and craftsmanship, historical illustrative value as a good example of a Sussex farmhouse, later village house, of its period, and aesthetic value based in part on the use of vernacular materials viewed against the backdrop of the landscape from which they were drawn. As such, the surviving rural setting of the farmhouse, which consists primarily of the fields to the west and southwest (including the application site) will make a strong positive contribution to the special interest of the listed building and the manner in which this is appreciated, in particular those parts of that interest which are drawn from historical illustrative and aesthetic values. This contribution is enhanced by the historical relationship of function between these fields (including the site) and the farmhouse- the submitted Heritage Statement confirms that they were part of the farmlands of Daltons Farm.

The farmhouse also has group value with the surviving former farm buildings to the south, which include The Byre. Based on the date of conversion of this building and the date of listing of Dalton's Farm, I think it is unlikely that The Byre would be regarded as curtilage listed, however it would be regarded as a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA). Daltons Farm is recorded in the West Sussex Historic Farmstead and Landscape Character assessment as a historic farmstead of the post Medieval period.

The proposed development site is to the southwest of the farmhouse, but will be prominent in views from the building and its close setting, including views from upper floors of the house. It also provides part of the context within which the house is viewed from The Street and from the recreation ground to the eastern side of the road, which includes some higher ground. These views are glimpsed, but allow the farmhouse to continue to be appreciated from the village within a rural/agricultural context. In addition, there are views across the site towards the rear of the farmhouse from the public right of way (PROW) which runs west-east from Foxhole Lane to The Street across the southern edge of the site. These views are again glimpsed due to planting to the

northern side of the path, but from some points along the path the upper part of the farmhouse is clearly visible, and again is currently seen within a rural, edge of village context.

Furthermore, the proposed site access runs along the farm track directly to the south of the farmhouse and its gardens, which currently provides vehicle access to Daltons Farm and The Byre, and bisects the Daltons Farm historic farmstead.

Bolney Conservation Area consists of two parts, centred on the historic foci of development at the southern and northern ends of The Street. The application site is directly adjacent to the western boundary of the northern part of the Area. A brief historic map regression exercise suggests that the early development of this part of the village was chiefly around a series of farmsteads, including Daltons Farm. Although there is not an adopted character appraisal document for the Bolney Conservation Area, the Council's document '*Conservation Areas in Mid Sussex*' provides a brief high-level analysis of some of the key features of the Area. This suggests that the northern part of the Area is characterised by low density development, with trees, hedges and open spaces making an important contribution to its attractiveness. The document also highlights the importance of the rural setting of the Area, including countryside views, to its character- these features reflect the early development of this part of the village around a grouping of farmsteads.

The surviving rural setting of the northern part of the Area will be considered to make a strong positive contribution to its special character. The application site is an important part of that rural setting being one of relatively few points where the boundary of the Area continues to directly abut the surrounding countryside. It provides the backdrop against which the part of the Area to the western side of this part of The Street is viewed from the road and from the recreation ground, and is also directly adjacent to the PROW running towards the Conservation Area through the countryside between Foxhole Lane and The Street. As such it has a strong impact on the character of the approach into the Area along this path.

The current proposal is for a residential cul-de-sac development of 5 new houses on the site, including an access road which would be an extension of the existing farm entrance track, a detached garage relating to one of the new properties, and a further detached garage to the eastern side of the site which would be for The Byre, parking and turning areas, and associated hard and soft landscaping, including a bin collection point/store to be located adjacent to the access and forward of the listed building.

The proposal would have a fundamental impact on the character of the site, which would become suburbanised. This will remove and reverse the positive contribution which the site makes, through setting, to the significances of the heritage assets identified above. The impact will be exacerbated by the proposal to provide access to the site via the farm entrance track, which is within the Conservation Area and runs straight through the historic farmstead, directly adjacent to both the listed farmhouse

and the NDHA at The Byre. The location of the proposed bin store/collection point is also contentious in this respect.

This impact will also be cumulative with the approved residential development of 200 new houses on the fields to the southern side of the PROW (Land at Foxhole Farm DM/25/1129), although the current proposal is in greater proximity to both assets. Importantly, development on the current application site would remove the remaining buffer of open, agricultural land between the assets and this larger development.

Although I will not comment in detail on the design of the development, in my opinion aspects of the site layout including the density of the development, the position of the access, the proximity of built form to the historic farmstead and Conservation Area boundary, and the location of the bin collection point/store within the farmstead, exacerbate the harm caused. Please also see below in relation to a lack of consideration within the scheme to mitigation of harm.

For these reasons, I would consider that the proposal will result in a level of harm, through impact on setting, to both Daltons Farmhouse and the Bolney Conservation Area. In terms of the new NPPF I would consider this harm to be not equivalent to substantial harm or total loss, but to be at around the mid-level of the scale sitting below this in both cases. Under paragraph HE6.4 of the new NPPF this harm stands to be weighed against the public benefits, if any, of the proposal.

In undertaking the balancing exercise set out by paragraph HE6.4, which is a matter for the Case Officer, it should be noted that the new NPPF requires that substantial weight should be given to an asset's conservation (HE6.1), and that any harm to a designated asset shall be of considerable importance and weight (HE6.3).

Policies HE4.1 and HE4.2 will also be relevant. HE4.1 requires that development proposals should avoid or minimise harm to the significance of heritage assets, and instead conserve this significance. HE4.2 requires that any harm to, or loss of significance of a heritage asset should have a clear and convincing justification. In my opinion the proposal fails to meet these tests- the proposal does not, for example, appear to include any attempt to mitigate the harm arising to either asset; indeed the proposed new pedestrian access gates to the rear of the proposed houses onto the PROW would increase views into the site from this direction.

Policy HE7 refers to non-designated heritage assets, and requires that where a development proposal would harm the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, this should be weighed against the benefits of the proposal and a balanced judgement made, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the non-designated heritage asset. Based on the limited information in front of us, I would identify a mid-level of harm, through impact on setting, to an asset of a mid-level of interest within the local context.

The proposal is also contrary to the requirements of District Plan Policies DP34 and DP35.

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.

Submit your planning application online.

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk>

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