

From: Emily Wade <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 03 October 2025 15:40:57 UTC+01:00
To: "Andy Watt" <Andy.Watt@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: DM/25/1921 Site of former East Lodge Farm, Malthouse Lane, HPP

Hi Andy

Comments on the above planning application.

The proposed development site is a currently undeveloped field to the west of Malthouse Lane. The site was for a time during the second half of the 20th century partly occupied by poultry sheds, but these have been removed.

The site is within the wider setting of Kents Farm, a 17th century Grade II listed farmhouse which is located a short distance to the south. There are a number of surviving ancillary buildings to the south of the house, which were historically part of the Kents Farm farmstead, and which may be regarded as curtilage listed or as NDHAs (more information would be required to establish which if either would apply). Based on the limited information in front of us, I would consider it likely that Kents Farmhouse will possess architectural value based on its construction and craftsmanship, historical illustrative value as a good example of a Sussex farmhouse of its period, and aesthetic value based in part on the use of vernacular materials viewed within the landscape from which they were drawn. The former farm buildings are likely to possess similar values as examples of historical agricultural buildings of their type and period. The surviving rural setting of the farmhouse and farmstead will make a strong positive contribution to the special interest of the listed buildings and associated farmstead and the manner in which this is appreciated, in particular the buildings' historical illustrative and aesthetic values.

At the current time, intervisibility between the site the farmstead may be limited by intervening planting, however no images appear to be provided within the current application documents to demonstrate the level of visual connection between the two. Also, it should be noted that planting is potentially ephemeral, so that any screening that this currently affords should not be regarded as necessarily permanent. In addition, the site affects the character of the close approach to Kents Farm along Malthouse Lane from the north, and as it is likely that the site was formerly part of the farmlands associated with Kents Farm, has a shared historical relationship of function with the historic farmstead. In my opinion therefore, based on the limited information in front of us, the site in its current undeveloped form would be considered to make a positive contribution to the setting and special interests of the listed building and other heritage assets at Kents Farm.

The submitted Heritage Statement also identifies Eastlands Farm, an apparently 19th century farmstead to the eastern side of Malthouse Lane, to the north-east of the site, as a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA). No further information is provided in this

respect, but a brief historical map regression exercise suggests potential survival of a small number of historic buildings around the former farmstead, which is set back from the road. Again, as former farmstead, the surviving rural setting around it would be considered to make a positive contribution to its significance as an NDHA. The site is part of the farmstead's wider setting, and contributes positively to that setting, including the character of the approach to it along Malthouse Lane.

Planning permission was granted in 2021 for an office building with associated access and car parking. It is the applicant's position that this permission has been partly implemented and is extant, and is therefore the fall-back position should the current application be refused. A low level of less than substantial harm, through impact on setting, to the special interest of Kents Farm was identified in relation to this development.

The current proposal is for the construction of 7 dwellings with garages, parking, access from Malthouse Lane and associated hard and soft landscaping, including acoustic fencing. This will have a marked impact on the character of the site, which would become a suburban enclave, at odds with the rural nature of the majority of Malthouse Lane, and detracting from the positive contribution which the site currently makes to the settings of the above-mentioned heritage assets. The harm caused will be cumulative with that arising from the existing commercial building and battery storage facility to the north and west of the site. I would note, however, that the scale and design of the development when compared with the previously permitted office scheme is such that the level of harm arising from it is in my opinion likely to be at the lower end of the less than substantial scale, and lower than that identified in relation to the 2021 permission. The balancing exercise set out in paragraph 215 of the NPPF will therefore apply.

A similarly low level of harm would arise with respect to the NDHA at Eastlands Farm. Without further information, it is difficult to assess the level of significance of the farmstead within the local context as required by paragraph 216 of the NPPF, but I would expect this to be low-mid.

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>

Emily Wade Ma MSc
Conservation Officer
Planning Services
Tel: +44 (0)1444 477385
emily.wade@midsussex.gov.uk <http://www.midsussex.gov.uk>

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