

From: Emily Wade <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 09 July 2025 11:13:30 UTC+01:00
To: "Andrew Horrell" <Andrew.Horrell@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: DM/25/0559 The Old Malthouse, Ockley Manor Farm

Hi Andrew

Further comments on the above application following the receipt of further plans.

Firstly I would note that it does not appear that Historic England has been consulted? This should be done, now that we have more information in front of us, given the II* listing of Ockley Manor.

Various revised plans and supporting statements have been received, although these remain less than ideal in some respects (for example unless I have missed something we do not appear to have existing and proposed elevations of the building affected by the proposed window alterations?) however the information is about sufficient to allow an assessment of the impact of the works on the character of the Old Malthouse as an NDHA and its contribution to the settings of the adjacent listed buildings.

To consider these works in turn:

- Solar PV Panels: It is proposed to install 15 solar PV panels to the east facing roofslope of the main building, which runs north-south adjacent to Ockley Lane. Although these panels will have a marked impact on the appearance of the building, this will principally affect views from within the courtyard/garden area at the centre of the yard of former agricultural buildings of which the Old Malthouse is part. The impact on views of the building from the Lane and from the immediate settings of the adjacent listed buildings is likely to be less significant, due in part to the enclosed nature of the yard.

- This aspect of the proposal will result in a mid level of harm to the Old Malthouse as an NDHA of a mid level of interest in the local context. In terms of the impact, through setting, on the special interests of the adjacent listed buildings, I would place this at the lower end of the scale. The great weight which must be attached to this harm under para. 212 of the NPPF stands to be weighed against the public benefits, if any, of the proposal, bearing in mind that para. 167 of the Framework requires that significant weight should be given to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating measures to existing buildings.

- Therapy pool: The proposed therapy pool is to be located within the courtyard area, parallel with the southern range of buildings which surround it. The pool is approximately 8m x 4m in footprint and 1.6m high with a telescopic cover. Although this will have a somewhat domesticating impact on the courtyard to the former agricultural buildings, it is a relatively modest structure and a potentially reversible intervention. This aspect of the proposal is therefore not on balance considered contentious, subject to appropriate screening around the pool, including of views from the direction of Ockley Lane.
- ASHP: The proposed ASHP is shown located adjacent to the southern elevation of the western range. Whilst there would be no objection in principle to an ASHP, this location renders it potentially visible in views from the Lane when the vehicle gates are left open.

I would suggest it would be better located adjacent to the eastern elevation if this is possible. If not, appropriate screening should be introduced around the pump, to avoid harm to the significance of the NDHA and the settings of the adjacent heritage assets.

- Amendments to windows: The proposal includes alterations to the form and proportions of a number of windows to the eastern and northern elevations of the building. It is proposed to enlarge a number of openings and to replace timber casement windows with aluminium windows of a different design.

It is good practice in the conversion of a former agricultural building and creation of windows and doors to make use wherever possible of existing openings, and to keep the number and size of new openings to a minimum, to preserve the existing character of the building, and to avoid domesticating features. (Ref. Historic England guidance HEAN 9 '*The Adaptive Re-use of Traditional Farm Buildings*': historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/adaptive-reuse-traditional-farm-buildings-advice-note-9/heag156-adaptive-reuse-farm-buildings/). Appropriate design and materials will also be important. The conversion of the former malthouse has been accomplished in a relatively sympathetic manner, and the existing timber casement windows are appropriate to this context.

For this reason, I consider that this aspect of the proposal is partially contentious. Whilst I would not object to the lowering of the sill to the existing French windows to the southern end of the eastern elevation, the replacement windows themselves should be of a more sympathetic design, retaining the current vertical emphasis, and should be of painted timber. Aluminium windows will not be acceptable in this context. Side opening rather than top hung casements should also be employed.

The enlargement of the remaining windows affected by the proposal, to the kitchen and bedroom, is in my opinion unfortunately contentious in principle as this would have both a domesticating impact on the building's appearance, and would detract from the currently fairly consistent proportions of the window openings. Again, the use of aluminium windows and of top rather than side hung casements is also unacceptable in this context.

I note the applicant's point re greater thermal efficiency, but it is quite possible to achieve this with high quality modern timber framed casement windows, which should also be easy to open.

This aspect of the proposal therefore requires reconsideration. As it stands the proposal is harmful to the significance of the NDHA, resulting in a mid level of harm to an asset of a mid level of interest in the local context, and also to the positive contribution that the building makes to the settings of the adjacent listed buildings, resulting in low level of harm, through impact on setting, to their special interests and how these are appreciated.

- Painting of the southern building: The application property includes the western end of the southern range of buildings enclosing the courtyard. Historical map regression shows that this is a more modern building, dating from around the mid 20th century. In other circumstances, painting of the timber cladding to the building in a black water based paint as shown would be unlikely to be considered contentious, but as the

proposal here affects only the part of the structure which is in the applicant's ownership, it will have a detrimental impact on its appearance as the elevational treatment will become inconsistent. This will be harmful to the contribution which this building makes to the settings of the other buildings around the courtyard and to the adjacent listed buildings. I would suggest this element of the proposal is therefore rethought._

In summary, although aspects of the proposal are considered acceptable, others result in harm to the significance of the NDHA or its setting, and to the settings of the adjacent listed buildings, as set out above. Amendments would be required, but as it stands the proposal overall would be contrary to the requirements of District Plan Policy DP34.

With respect to the proposed solar PV panels a balanced judgement is required as set out above.

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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From: Emily Wade
Sent: 25 April 2025 14:40
To: Andrew Horrell <Andrew.Horrell@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: DM/25/0559 The Old Malthouse, Ockley Manor Farm

Hi Andrew

I have been looking over the above application and note a number of problems with the submission:

- This site is within the setting of several designated heritage assets- Ockley Manor which is Grade II* listed, the associated dovecot and barn (both Grade II listed) and the former farm cottages (also Grade II). The building in question forms part of the historic farmstead associated with Ockley Manor and if it is not regarded as curtilage listed, would be considered an NDHA. A heritage statement would be a validation requirement, and has not been provided. This should be requested from the applicant. The statement should be prepared according to the staged approach to the assessment of development within the settings of heritage assets set out in the relevant Historic England guidance GPA Note 3 '*The Setting of Heritage Assets*'.
- In general, there is a lack of adequate existing and proposed plans and elevations drawn to an appropriate scale.
- For example, the proposal includes replacement windows but the document submitted suggests that the proportions of the window openings are also proposed to be altered. Scaled existing and proposed elevations should be provided. The windows affected should also be marked on a plan of the building.
- The proposal includes solar panels to the roof. These should also be shown on scaled existing and proposed plans and elevations. Scaled sectional drawings showing the panels in the context of the surrounding roof would also be useful.
- Scaled existing and proposed site plans should be provided to show the location and proportions of the proposed ASHP (which should also be shown on the proposed elevations) and therapy pool. Again, a section should also be provided to show any upstand.
- I also note that some of submitted plans are not saved correctly, so that the left hand half of the document is missing.

Whilst I would not wish to place overly onerous requirements on the applicant, accurate, scaled drawings are a basic requirement of an application of this nature, and will be particularly important in a context which is as sensitive as this in heritage terms.

Once this further information is received, Historic England should be consulted given the II* listing of Ockley Manor.

Thanks,

Emily

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