

From: Emily Wade <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 13 February 2026 15:35:03 UTC+00:00
To: "Caroline Grist" <Caroline.Grist@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: DM/25/2644 and 2645 Wykehurst House

Hi Caroline

Further comments on the above applications.

Firstly, I note the comments in the covering note from Mr Stickland that his client is hopeful of buying the driveway which approaches the house from the east via London Road. This is suggested to reinstate the historic primary access to the listed building, which in principle would be welcomed. However, as the purchase does not seem to be finalised, and as the existing arrangement is admitted to be casual, the weight that can be attached to this in terms of the consideration of the current proposal must be limited. At present, the closest and apparently most heavily used access to Wykehurst is from the west via Colwood Lane, and the works affecting this access must be considered in that light. Also, I would consider it likely that the driveway from Colwood Lane will continue to be used on a regular basis even if the eastern access is reinstated, for practical reasons, bearing in mind the relative length of the two approaches.

The revised plans received continue to indicate repairs to the walls around the northern front courtyard and western terrace to the house. The applicant has indicated that a condition relating to the detail of these works would be accepted, and I am content that further information as to the nature of the repairs could be submitted in this manner.

With respect to the works to the historic gateway to the western side of the front courtyard, these have now been withdrawn from the scheme. This is somewhat regrettable, as it removes a potential benefit to the special interest of the listed walls and to the setting and special interest of the house. With respect to the proposed new outer gates the application has been revised to show a simpler design, which is welcomed in principle, although the inclusion to the inner side of the gates of black metal screening is not appropriate, in that it would block views along the driveway towards the listed gateway and house beyond. This screening should be removed from the proposed design.

The location of the proposed plant area has not been revised as previously recommended. Whilst I note the suggestion that the adjacent western driveway may be considered a more secondary approach, if a primary access from the east is formally re-established, for the reasons given above I do not consider that this can be given significant weight in the context of the current applications. It remains my opinion that this is not an appropriate location for a plant enclosure, and that this should be re-sited in a less visually prominent position. The design of the enclosure itself has been reconsidered, and whilst I appreciate the intention behind this is to sit the structure more comfortably in its context, I do not consider that this is sufficient to outweigh the harm

caused by its overly prominent location. Similarly, although an explanation as to why the applicant considers the location appropriate has been provided, no assessment of other alternative positions is given. On that basis we have no evidence before us to demonstrate that the harm arising from the enclosure has been minimised, and the clear and convincing justification for this harm required by paragraph 213 of the NPPF is therefore lacking. This aspect of the proposal therefore remains contentious.

In summary, aspects of the proposal unfortunately remain contentious, and are considered to cause harm to the settings and special interest of the listed walls and gates, and of Wykehurst House. Although the heritage benefit potentially arising from the repair of the walls is noted, on balance the proposal remains contrary to the requirements of District Plan Policy DP34. In terms of the NPPF, the proposal results in less than substantial harm, such that the balancing exercise set out in paragraph 215 will apply.

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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