

From: Emily Wade <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 28 August 2026 15:30:17 UTC+01:00
To: "Caroline Grist" <Caroline.Grist@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: DM/26/1520 Grove Farm, Cansiron Lane, Ashurst Wood

Hi Caroline

Comments on the above planning application.

Grove Farm is a Grade II listed 16th century or earlier farmhouse located in a semi-rural position on the outskirts of Ashurst Wood. A barn survives to the north of the house which would be regarded as curtilage listed, and is now a separate dwelling. Both the farmhouse and barn are likely to be considered to possess architectural value based on their construction and craftsmanship, and illustrative historical value as good examples of buildings of their type and period, and in the manner in which they demonstrate the changing economic and social conditions of this part of Sussex over time since their construction. They also possess fortuitous aesthetic value both individually and as a group, which would rely in part on the use of vernacular materials and their relationship with the surrounding landscape. The farm is recorded in the West Sussex Historic Farmsteads and Landscape Character assessment as a historic farmstead dating from the medieval period.

Although ribbon development has spread westwards from Ashurst Wood along Cansiron Lane towards Grove Farm, the farmstead remains surrounded to the north, east and south by open fields and woods. This surviving rural setting makes a strong positive contribution to the manner in which the special illustrative historical and aesthetic values of the farmhouse and barn, as identified above, are appreciated.

To the north of the historic grouping are a couple of more modern outbuildings, one of which is the subject of this application. Although the farmhouse and barn lie within Mid Sussex, the outbuilding, which is part of the Grove Farm Barn property, is within Wealden District. The current proposal is for conversion of this building, which is in use as a garage and machinery store, into a residential access, with associated alterations.

The existing building is a timber framed structure clad with weatherboarding and set on a brick plinth. It has a pitched tiled roof. Although it is relatively modern in date (possibly c. mid 20th century), it retains an agricultural character which is sympathetic to the rural context of the farmstead, and makes a neutral contribution to the setting and significance of the listed and curtilage listed buildings.

The proposed external alterations to the building include the introduction of a number of new window and door openings, glazing of an existing opening, creation of a recess with side windows within a second existing opening, new rooflights, and a flue for a woodburning stove.

In my opinion, although from a perspective of impact on the character of the setting of the listed buildings the conversion of this building for ancillary residential use is unlikely to prove contentious in principle, the external alterations as shown have a domesticating impact on the appearance of the building which results in harm to the existing rural nature of that setting. This is due in particular to the number, size and design of the new window and door openings to the building.

The proposal therefore results in harm, through impact on setting, to the special interests of Grove Farm House and Grove Farm Barn. This harm would sit around the low-mid range of that scale. 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 is also contrary to the requirements of District Plan DP34.

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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