

Joanne Fisher

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 September 2025 16:39
To: Joanne Fisher
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: DM/25/1023- Heritage Comments

Dear Joanne

I just tried to call you regarding the above to have a quick chat ahead of sending this email.

We have reviewed the comments which have come through on the above planning application from MSDC's heritage officer.

As you are aware the application unit and wider equestrian Site is in a very poor state of repair and sits between a designated heritage asset (Crabbet Park House) and a commercial gym/ hotel which has permanently changed the historical context of the wider area. Significant investment is needed to the wider equestrian centre, and this proposal (alongside a future scheme for which pre-app has been undertaken, but for the purposes of this application, is not relevant) seek to bring the Site into a much more vibrant and environmentally attractive use with a scheme which is seeking to sensitively incorporate the historic equestrian / wider history of the site. It's our strong view that this provides a heritage benefit rather than harm, and an approach we would hope would be welcomed by officers given the wider development pressures elsewhere in this area.

We are, therefore, slightly surprised and disappointed to see the comments which have landed which seem to not appreciate the steps which have been taken to understand and incorporate the historic element; not least given we had arranged for our heritage consultant to visit the Site with the Council's heritage officer on the 11th September, however missed her because the officer visited an hour earlier than advised. Whilst diary mishaps of course happen, a subsequent offer to chat this through on the phone was also not accepted. A discussion on some of these issues, and providing an explanation of the rationale being taken on the Site, may have helped address some of the concerns raised.

The planning application is accompanied by a robust Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) which demonstrates that the heritage significance of the listed buildings and the role of the Site in contributing to that significance is fully understood. The applicant has sought to carefully consider the heritage issues to provide a high-quality scheme. We note comments suggesting further heritage justification is required and we would be grateful it could be confirmed what the council requires in this respect.

We note references within the formal consultation response to a wider scheme for the Site (which has not been submitted). These are not a relevant consideration for this planning application DM/25/1023. Our comments below therefore focus on the "Granary Building" and the application proposals to replace the existing building with a single dwelling.

The Application Building

The existing building is formed of two parts: the historic weatherboarded granary (photo below), and a later extension to the west (added to in the past 40 years, which is raised up on modern brick piers). The submitted HIA confirms Emily's view that the granary building is a non-designated heritage asset.



The building is not safe to enter and has significant structural issues. Not least the presence of a tree growing into the southern elevation of the building which has displaced a brick chimney and aided water ingress and vegetation growth within the building. While an internal inspection of the building was not possible it is evident that the timber cladding and frame of the eastern and western parts of the building are in serious decline. The brick chimney stack, which is partly external and partly internal is likely providing some structural stability to the southern part of the granary building but the tree which has taken route below the building is pushing on the elevation from the bottom. Taking into consideration the significant roots from what is assumed to be an ivy plant the likelihood is that much of the external material is not salvageable because as soon as dismantling of the structures starts the fabric is likely to crumble without the stabilising influences of the vegetation and the brick chimney. It is an unsafe structure with wholesale missing roof tiles, rotting timbers and structural failures. This is wholly evident from a site visit and the photographs included in the submission.

We note the Heritage Officer has requested a structural survey. This was not submitted with the original application; it was considered unnecessary given the obviously dilapidated stage of the building which is not statutorily listed. If, however, you would consider this helpful to inform your consideration of the application we can arrange for one to be provided for completeness. However, we consider it extremely unlikely to draw different conclusions to the above.

The Building's Contribution to the Character and Setting of Crabbet Park House and other Listed Buildings

It should be noted that the granary building pre-dates the equestrian use of the wider site and was not designed as a building for that use, thus its contribution to the history of the stud in our view is practically nil. It does not and did not house horses during the equestrian use of the wider site and must have been in a poor state of repair for a considerable number of years. Our view is that it most likely formed part of the home farm for Crabbet Park house, which was rebuilt in 1873. This is a building for storing grain, an ancillary building to a farm setting and set well away from the main listed building. It does contribute, in a minor way, to the historical interest of Crabbet Park House as part of its wider estate setting, albeit it is physically and visually severed and does not have a particular historical association with the present grade II* listed house, which was built after the granary.

The HIA which accompanies the application sets out a Statement of Significance of the designated heritage assets at Section 5. We do not repeat the conclusions here.

Proposed Development

It is proposed to dismantle the building in its entirety given that it is currently an unsafe structure. In order to retain as much of the character of the granary as possible the proposal allows for it to be rebuilt in a like for like fashion, using the existing staddle stones and replicating the appearance of the building in broadly the same location.

We agree there will be a physical impact upon the former granary building. This, however, will be partly mitigated by the replication of its forms and features and the reusing of as much material as possible. As such, we firmly disagree with Emily's comment that the demolition of the building will result in a "total loss of significance".

The value of the asset lies in its historic function and form rather than its intrinsic fabric, which can be closely replicated to ensure the character of the building is both retained and enhanced. By separating the

granary from the rest of the building and only having a narrow-glazed link it will be understood much more clearly in terms of its historical role in the wider estate. Its location will remain the same in terms of its spatial relationship with the wider built form and boundaries and its character will be maintained.

Indeed, when considering the existing condition of the building and its risk of collapse, this scheme is considered to enhance the heritage values of the non-designated heritage asset by retaining as much material as possible and bringing it into a viable new use, complying with the provisions of NPPF para. 216.

The design of the proposed dwelling has been developed to reflect the local vernacular and proposes the same form and materials as approved for Stables Cottage (LPA Ref. DM/23/3221). It provides a framing of the informal parking courtyard to the west, opposite Stables Cottage, reflecting the historic courtyard arrangements evident on historic maps.

While the new two storey part of the building will be materially taller than the former granary, this only serves to emphasise the historical function and interest of the granary, which at present is subsumed into a modern building. This contrast will also be emphasised through the use of black timber weatherboarding vs. white weatherboarding. The scheme will better reveal the significance of the former granary.

Impact on Listed Buildings

The former granary contributes to the significance of all three listed buildings in a minor way as a small ancillary structure which formed part of the wider estate land. Its contribution relates to historical interest rather than architectural, archaeological or artistic. As noted above, the Granary does not form a role in the equestrian nature of the land.

Its visual and physical connection with the three listed buildings is very limited and it does not play a significant role in the setting of any of the listed buildings to the north and northeast in terms of key views toward or from them. We therefore disagree with the Heritage Officer's conclusion that there will be "less than substantial harm" to the character of the setting of the listed building. The character of this area is comprised of dilapidated buildings, extensive hard standing and car parking. Beyond which is a large overbearing commercial gym structure and hotel. Given the context of the site, and poor state of the building, we consider the scheme is actually neutral to beneficial.

Notwithstanding this firm view, if you are minded to agree that the demolition of this building will result in less than substantial harm there are clear benefits which would outweigh this in the planning balance in line with NPPF para. 215. This includes 1) removal of an unsafe structure 2) provision of an additional dwelling; and 3) the replacement with a building that retains as much of the existing building as reasonably practical to do so, while enhancing its presence as a historic granary in its original location. This proposal gives the building a long-term use, ensuring its maintenance and upkeep while enhancing the legibility of its historical function and value in a proportionate way.

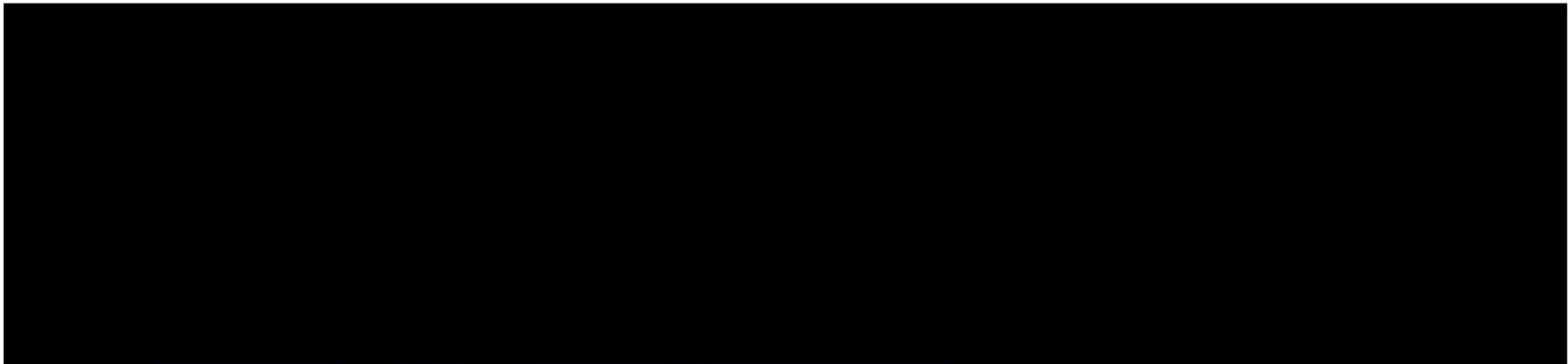
Summary

The current building on the application site is in an extremely poor state of repair. The "do-nothing" approach would ultimately probably lead to its collapse. The proposed scheme has been very carefully designed to reflect the existing granary building, utilising materials and structures as noted above, and will allow a scheme to come forward respecting the former heritage of this part of the site and in a way that will not lead to any harm, in our view to the setting of the listed building. If you were to take a cautious approach, and agree with the view of the council's heritage officer, the benefits as noted above would outweigh this very negligible harm.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this with your further, and would be happy to arrange a Site meeting if considered helpful.

Kind regards
Hannah

Hannah Young
Associate Director (Planning)



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