

Response to Mid Sussex District Council's Pre-Application Consultation Comments (ref: DM/24/2948)

Site: Ormonde Hall, Cowfold Road, Bolney, West Sussex, RH17 5SE

Client: Mr & Mrs Collins

Date: 27th January 2025

Author: Esther Robinson Wild BA (Hons) PgDip MA FSA MCIfA

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report responds to comments provided by Mid Sussex District Council's Senior Planning Officer (Brookleigh) on a pre-application consultation relating to proposed amendments to previous planning approvals for alteration and development at Ormonde Hall, Cowfold Road, Bolney. The comments were provided by email on 10th January 2025.
- 1.2 It was commissioned to accompany an application for a Variation (to allow for adjustments to the Hall House and New Build Extension) of Condition 1 of the planning approval granted under application ref: DM/23/0817 pursuant of application ref: DM/21/2193, with the description:

'Demolition of existing 20th Century burnt out house attached to 15th Century Grade II Listed Hall/Barn and erection of a replacement 2 Storey House with a single storey frameless glass link between replacement house and Grade II Listed Hall/Barn. In addition a detached Triple Garage is proposed.' (Planning, Design and Access Statement (Gould Baxter))
- 1.3 The report has been prepared by Esther Robinson Wild, Historic Environment Consultant and Director of Robinson Wild Consulting. Esther has a postgraduate qualification (MA) in the archaeology of buildings obtained from the University of York and is a Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) accredited professional at the highest level – Member (MCIfA).
- 1.4 In 2019, the author of this report was engaged with Dr Gerry Wait of Triskelion Heritage to prepare a heritage statement (ref: 19-R01: Draft v.2 – Pre-Application 29-08-2020) to inform proposals for development at the site. Following a pre-application process and the subsequent updating of the heritage statement to reflect revisions to the design proposals, a final heritage statement (Robinson Wild Consulting and Triskelion Heritage, March 2021; ref: 19-R01; Final – 08-03-21) (hereafter the "Heritage Statement") was prepared in March 2021. The Heritage Statement was informed by a site visit undertaken on 7th November 2019 and archival and desk top research. A subsequent site visit was undertaken on 23rd January 2023.
- 1.5 The Heritage Statement presented a focused summary of the developmental history of the Old Hall (also referred to as the "Hall House" in planning related documentation) and the site, an assessment of significance and an assessment of the proposals in the context of applicable legislation, national, and local planning policy, and guidance. This was in keeping with the National Planning Policy Framework's ("NPPF") direction for proportionality in the context of the heritage asset's importance.
- 1.6 The Heritage Statement contained an objective and thorough evidence-based professional assessment of the hall house and the site that was prepared in accordance with CIfA's *Standard*

and *Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment* (2020) and informed by best practice.

- 1.7 The author's review of the pre-application consultation comments provided on 10th January 2025 concluded that the requests for clarification/confirmation contained within them could be addressed through a short report in which direction is given to the Heritage Statement in which the information is already contained. Where considered appropriate, further clarification is provided herein. Detailed plans and drawings of the proposed variations provided by Gould Baxter have been reviewed in conjunction with the review of the comments and the Heritage Statement.

2.0 Response to the pre-application consultation comments

Hall House & Link

2.1 Allowance for a bathroom in later addition first floor bedroom.

- Confirmation of the construction date of the "later addition" is requested.

It is important to highlight that the Heritage Statement did not state nor suggest that the addition to the hall house is of 1920s date. It is clearly stated within the Heritage Statement that it is of mid-late twentieth century date. This is evidenced by cartographic, documentary, including photographic and physical evidence all of which is either referred to or presented within the Heritage Statement. In this regard, direction is given to,

- Paragraph 3 of section '**East Range (Fifteenth Century with Sixteenth Century and Early – Mid 1920s alterations) – Ground Floor (Plates 7 – 15; 36 – 49)**' on page 31 of the Heritage Statement.

"The south elevation has been entirely modernised through the addition of a two-storey and single-storey extensions with gable. These mid – late twentieth century additions completely obscure the south elevation of the Old Hall/former farmhouse. "

- Paragraph 5 of section '**East Range (Fifteenth Century with Sixteenth Century and Early – Mid 1920s alterations) – Ground Floor (Plates 7 – 15; 36 – 49)**' on page 31 of the Heritage Statement states that the two-storey extension to the south elevation is of mid-late twentieth century date. It also states that,

"The extension was preceded by a conservatory constructed by Daly Butler and accessed at the same point (fig. 17). Daly Butler noted that he had utilised an existing doorway to the garden."

- Paragraph 3 of section 'Evidential Value' on page of the Heritage Statement reiterates the construction date of the two-storey extension,

"The east range has historically, and most notably, undergone significant alteration in the early – mid 1920s as detailed in Section 3.0 and Section 4.0. Externally, on the rear (south) elevation it was first altered in the early 1920s with the addition of a conservatory and then subsequently in the mid-late twentieth century when a replacement single-storey brick extension was added which was then extended to first floor level."

- Appendix 2 (pages 50 – 51) of the Heritage Statement contains figures (35 & 36) which contain phased plans of the ground and first floors with the addition marked in light blue (Mid-Late 20th century)

It has therefore previously been confirmed that the addition dates to the mid-late twentieth century.

2.2 Allowance for dual aspect fireplace.

- Confirmation of the replacement during the 1920s of the sixteenth century fireplace and chimney is requested.

Direction is given to,

- First paragraph of section ‘**East Range (Fifteenth Century with Sixteenth Century and Early – Mid 1920s alterations) – Ground Floor (Plates 7 – 15; 36 – 49)**’ on page 30 of the Heritage Statement which is set out below for ease of reference (text emphasised by the author)._

“Daly Butler records that he replaced the Horsham slab roof when restoring the building. He also records that he replaced the sixteenth century “Great Fireplace and Chimney” (figs.29; 32). This is evident from both an examination of the extant chimney breast which is constructed of modern brick and substantially replicates the early – mid 1920s fireplace and chimney breast situated in the former Great Hall (fig.34), and when comparing the “before” and “after” photographs (figs. 13 – 14) of the building. The latter exercise indicates that the pre-restoration chimney profile was slightly different and appears to have been of characteristically sixteenth century date.”

It clearly states that there is both documentary and physical evidence for the fireplace and chimney being of 1920s date. The design of the fireplace also indicates an early twentieth century date. Additionally, paragraph 4 of the same section states that Daly Butler records that he stripped the building back to its timber-frame skeleton and except for the gallery, removed all internal non-structural fixtures and fittings, including the sixteenth century fireplace. Paragraph 5 of the same section also states that,

“The Reception Hall also contains a large fireplace and chimney that Daly Butler records he built in the same position as that of the sixteenth century fireplace and chimney.”

- Appendix 4 (pages 54 – 55) of the Heritage Statement contains figures (39 – 40) in which the floor plans are annotated with details of Daly Butler’s interventions. The fireplace and chimney are clearly marked and noted as having been rebuilt.

It has therefore previously been confirmed that the extant fireplace and chimney date to the 1920s._

2.3 Allowance for a straight stair with cascading steps at lower end.

- Confirmation of the construction date of the staircase is requested.

As noted in paragraph 2.2 above, paragraph 4 of the same section states that Daly Butler records that he stripped the building back to its timber-frame skeleton and removed all internal non-structural fixtures and fittings. The documentary, including photographic, evidence indicates that the staircase was inserted by Daly Butler.

Additionally, a review of the historic photographs - figures 29 and 32 in the Heritage Statement (pages 33; 35) which date to the early twentieth century concludes that the form and profile of the newel posts are demonstrably of early twentieth century date.

Appendix 4 (pages 54 – 55) of the Heritage Statement contains figures (39 – 40) in which the floor plans are annotated with details of Daly Butler’s interventions. The staircase in the reception hall and the landing off the staircase leading to the gallery are clearly marked and noted as new insertions made by Daly Butler. Additionally, figure 39 notes that a small flight of oak stairs to the gallery was removed which aligns with the then new circulation pattern around the space with access to the gallery facilitated by the staircase and landing. It has therefore previously been confirmed that the staircase and the landing (including the pierced splat balusters) date to the 1920s.

- 2.4 Allowance to raise the existing balustrade to mezzanine area with a new balustrade that complies with current building regulations and protects the users from falling and replace the 1920 spindles with metal spindles.

As noted in paragraph 2.3 above, paragraph 4 of the same section states that Daly Butler records that he stripped the building back to its timber-frame skeleton and removed all internal non-structural fixtures and fittings. The balusters to the mezzanine are of the same profile as those to the staircase – pierced splat. They are of the same date as the staircase. The photograph below clearly shows that the balusters are machine sawn. The documentary, including photographic, evidence indicates that the staircase was inserted by Daly Butler. It is also concluded that the balusters are a Daly Butler intervention.



- 2.5 Reinstate the front entrance door.

It is proposed that the door is inserted into an existing door opening. The latter was formerly an interior doorway facilitating access between the hallway of the 1920’s extension and the hall house (the doorway on the left in the first photograph below (taken in 2023) and the doorway on

the right in the second photograph (taken in January 2025)). As can be seen in the first photograph, the door casing is not comprised of historic fabric, albeit on the right side, the casing abuts a historic vertical timber beam set on a stone base. The poor condition of the beam is evident from the photograph.

It is understood that a structural engineer with experience of historic buildings has undertaken a site visit and it is expected that given the location and condition of the vertical timber beam, their advice will be sought on how to ensure that the removal of the modern door casing and the insertion of the new door casing will not impact on the historic vertical timber beam, if its condition allows for its retention.





