From: Rainier, Peter <Peter.Rainier@dmhstallard.com>
Sent: 17 February 2026 18:19:34 UTC+00:00
To: "Steve Ashdown" <Steve.Ashdown@midsussex.gov.uk>; "Susan Dubberley" <Susan.Dubberley@midsussex.gov.uk>
Cc: "Ann Biggs" <ann.biggs@midsussex.gov.uk>; "Emily Wade" <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: FW: Marlow House draft [DMHS-DMS.FID8001034]
Attachments: FW: Victorian Window Marlow House, VIDEO-2023-11-27-18-58-04.mp4, VIDEO-2024-01-04-15-29-07.mp4, 2025.12.17_Marlow House Lindfield - Note on Planning Committee Meeting of 4-12-2025_v.3.pdf,

Dear Steve (and Susan),

Thank you for meeting with on 28th January and for our call on 4th February.

My summary of those discussions was that you could see a way to recommending approval of all elements of the latest scheme. However, subject to detailed conditions requiring compliance in a short time frame, you could recommend approval on the understanding that the proposals were revised to omit the southern section of the rear first floor addition to reveal the Edwardian gable.

We would request that the Committee Report makes that stance clear that with all the suggested revisions/re-instatements etc. the application is acceptable, subject to the removal of the southern section of dormer.

My client has considered this suggested approach but would request the Council continue to determine the application as submitted, subject to the comments below in relation to two matters, firstly the HE letter and secondly the starting point in the consideration of public benefits.

1. Comments on Historic England response.

We are somewhat bemused by Historic England's involvement on this application. The response is disappointing and it seems that the response has not heeded to the evidence submitted regarding changes made over time and continues to place too much value on elements where this is unwarranted and casts doubt on changes which are clearly beneficial. As such the interpretation of the impacts is unbalanced (e.g. decrying the loss of plan form because of the ground floor WC where plan form had already been much altered). The letter also ignores evidence provided which demonstrates the removal of non-original fabric.

Furthermore, there is no acknowledgement of the benefit of reinstating access to the attic which is rather glaring given the importance that appears to be placed on the 17th century phase of the building when the attic was brought into domestic use. Instead, the report focuses on the southeast bedroom where the removal of a modern ceiling gives, *'a misleading impression of the historic roof form'* and *'obscures understanding of the building's development.*' We strongly disagree - it is a minor change.
We would also remind you that under the approved planning document dated 12/05/23 under amount 3 it clearly states "removal of the existing ceiling finishes in the southern portion of the first floor, allowing for a vaulted ceiling with all roof timbers exposed and retained, akin to the existing vaulted ceiling to the northern part of the first floor".
It also clearly states on drawing GH 342 PLO7 point 27 – "All ceiling finishes to be removed".
By removing the ceiling finishes the Soot is clearly evident in the beams which was not visible with the existing ceiling construction.

Based on this approval the artex ceiling finish and plasterboard was removed.
By the creation of the vaulted ceiling the floorboards would naturally have to be relocated and this is proposed in the application.
Although not shown on the approved plans the current application includes, as a measure of good faith, the joists are being reinstated.

The insertion of a [lightweight] partition to form an en-suite bathroom to the north bedroom is cited as harmful, but this is not the case as the partition removed was non-historic. The change is very modest and is not *de facto* harmful.
It also clearly states on the Approved Planning Statement 12/05/23 " The subdivision of the existing middle first floor bathroom to create an en suite dressing room and shower room"

As already noted, we do not consider that the creation of a ground-floor WC has *'altered the original plan form of these spaces'*. The plan form has already been altered and was not original. We have amply demonstrated that the ground floor WC intervention did not necessitate the loss of historic fabric.

The HE letter opines that the introduction of modern fireplaces in the ground-floor living room and study has also changed the historic character of these rooms and concealed their chimney breasts and hearths. But there were no original hearths or exposed chimney breasts here, and certainly nothing of value:



The change is in our view neutral at worst.

The letter maintains that the '*infilling of the internalised openings within the 15th-century rear wall - although their precise original position remains unconfirmed - has reduced interpretive value'*. We disagree and the approach is contrary to conservation principles because it is based entirely on conjecture. The windows were modern insertions and entirely inappropriate. Their replacement in lime plaster infill should be regarded as an enhancement.

Please note the approved drawings GH342 PL02 B AND PLO3 C allowed the removal of all modern casement windows and points 17/17A & 4 confirm a high percentage were approved to be filled in with wood wall boards and plaster points. Note as stated below and confirmed in drawing references no windows existed in this elevation until 2000.

In addition to those points made above, we would make the following observations:

- There was never an enclosure on the upstairs staircase, see photograph of stairs on point 3.27 of the Heritage report. The underside was plastered, and we are proposing to do this in our scope of works. The HE letter incorrectly refers to '*reconstruction would however omit the first-floor enclosure'* .
  Please see revised drawings in the DAS showing the door now incorporated in the Upstairs Staircase – see second email to follow.

- We would like to point out the ground floor staircase is not 17th Century material as inferred. Both Heritage specialists confirm it is modern material - see the Desbrulais report (page 15) and HCUK report. The proposal is however to reinstating the ground floor staircase in original oak material - a clear benefit. evidence.

- The oak work is being replaced in the small snug on a like for like basis. No infill panels as agreed on original planning.
  Drawing GH342 PL02 Point 14A confirms removal of infill panels. Not all of these timbers were original see DAS report.

- Bakehouse there is nothing more that can be done, it collapsed and has been rebuilt in the same proportions.
  Only fabric replaced is brickwork and the conditions in the approval DM/22/3694 Condition 3 allows for this brickwork specification on the rear elevation of the extension. Building is identical it terms of location/scale now to the previous construction.

- Partition in en-suite had permission in original plans. Infill panels to be replaced. Planning Statement approval 12/05/23 Page 3 Subdivision of the existing middle floor bathroom to create an en suite Dressing Room and Shower Room.

- Video of well is available and I would question why she did not ask for this to be forwarded. I attach two videos of the well construction - these have already been sent but do not seem to have been viewEd by/made available to HE.

- Chimney Stack structurally unsound as confirmed by Structural Engineer report within DAS. Gould Baxter confirmed concerns in their report and based on the advice a Structural Report was commissioned. This has been completed and previously sent to MSDC**.** The condition of the Main Chimney was also dangerous as this collapsed under construction. This is evidence of a similar chimney in the building and the decaying fabric.

- The Victorian Gable will be exposed internally and, therefore, not concealed at all internally and only partially concealed externally.

- Also see attachment which confirms that the window in the Victorian Gable is in fact a modern, approximately 1950's. Both Desbrulais and HCUK Ltd confirm this in their Heritage statements. Your Conservation Officer was insistent that the window was original and was the key feature/reason to retain the Victorian Gable. The fact that the window is 'modern' reduces the importance of the gable. I have also attached a drawing from Kyson Architects

which illustrates the limited visibility of the Victorian Elevation from various angles in the garden if built to plan. You will see from various positions in the garden you will not be able to see the Gable (see yellow hatched area on the attachment). Also note that more importantly no other neighbouring dwelling can see the rear elevation, nor is the rear gable visible in public views.

- Overall, the footprint of the rear additions that are removed from the original building are up to 3m in depth.

- The floor space at first floor created by the extension is only 8m2 or 6% of overall first floor plan

- The height of the previous Conservatory in front of the Gable is illustrated in the window attachment. The Victorian Gable was never visible in its entirety due to the height of the conservatory extensions, which were of poor quality and harmful to the Listed Building.

- South East Bedroom form is not misleading as it has been approved. Please see above references. No significance lost as by the approved vaulted ceiling the floorboards have to be relocated.

- Downstairs W.C. As demonstrated in photographs this was a Breeze block wall covered with a modern stone nogging. The wall was built by the restaurateurs in the late 1980's as confirmed by the owner of Chimney Place in her letter of support. No loss of Historic fabric

2. Attached is HCUK Ltd notes on the planning committee which clearly highlight the many Public Benefits that are ignored in the EH Report

I will refrain from repeating the contents of the note, but for the avoidance of doubt, the baseline should have been the condition of the building prior to the implementation of the unauthorised works. The latter was the baseline for determining DM/22/3695 & DM/22/3694 (the 'Approved Scheme'). Collectively, the Application Scheme presents substantive *additional* heritage benefits which should be given due consideration and weight as part of the balancing exercise required under paragraph 215 of the NPPF as a mandatory material consideration.

As discussed, and agreed I look forward to seeing your Conservation Officers comments on the application prior to the completion of any Committee report.

Kind regards,

Peter