

From: Emily Wade <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 19 September 2024 15:07:54 UTC+01:00
To: "Katherine Williams" <Katherine.Williams@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: DM/24/2101 Springfield, Rashes Farm, Turners Hill

Hi Katherine

Comments on the above planning application.

Firstly I would note that no Heritage Statement has been submitted with the application- given the location within the setting of Rashes Farm, this would be a validation requirement. A statement should be provided based on the staged approach to assessment set out in the relevant Historic England guidance GPA Note 3 *'The Setting of Heritage Assets'*. The comments below may be subject to revision based on the contents of the Heritage Statement, when received.

The application site is a converted farm building within a courtyard forming part of the historic farmstead of Rashes Farm. The farmstead, which includes a Grade II listed 18th century farmhouse situated just to the north, is in a rural location outside Turners Hill. The building affected by the application is to the western side of the farmyard, and from its appearance and a brief historical map regression exercise is likely to date from the 19th century. The angular building forming the southern side of the yard, which has a front projection along the eastern side of the yard from its north eastern corner, and a rear projection to its south western corner facing onto what may have been a second, southern yard, may date in part from the 19th or early 20th centuries, but appears to have been fairly extensively altered. The north eastern corner of the yard is defined by a modern garage building which replaced earlier buildings in this position. A further detached building some distance to the west along the entrance track from Selsfield Road appears to be a converted and extended former cart lodge also associated with Rashes Farm.

Based on the limited information in front of us I would consider it likely that Rashes Farmhouse would be considered to possess architectural value based on its construction and craftsmanship, historical illustrative value as a good example of a Sussex farmhouse of its period, altered and extended in response to changing socio-economic circumstances, and aesthetic value based in part on the use of vernacular materials viewed within the landscape from which they were drawn. As such, both the surviving rural setting of the farmhouse, and the surviving former farmstead, which remains legible notwithstanding that some of the buildings have been altered or replaced, will make a strong positive contribution to the special interest of the listed building and how this is appreciated, in particular those parts of that interest which are drawn from historical illustrative and aesthetic values.

Again based on the limited information available, it is in my opinion that the buildings within the former farmyard are unlikely to be regarded as curtilage listed. However it is possible that at least some of them- including in particular the application property, which appears less altered- may be regarded as non-designated heritage assets (NDHAs), i.e. building of historical or architectural interest within the local context. These are issues which I would suggest could also usefully be addressed by the Heritage Statement.

The current proposal is for an extension to the front of the application property comprising a two storey projection with first floor accommodation set over an open sided porch. The addition is show with a gabled tiled roof, tiled elevations at first floor, with timber posts to the porch below set on brick plinth walls. The addition appears intended to resemble a projecting 'hayloft' or similar, with 'hayloft' doors to the front elevation with a decorative 'winch' above.

In my opinion the proposal raises a number of concerns in terms of the impact on the character of the building (a possible NDHA) and the positive contribution which it makes to the setting of the listed building:

- The principle of an extension to the front of the building is likely to be considered contentious, given its characteristic flat fronted form and frontage onto the former farm courtyard, which historically appears to have been a largely open area, as you would expect, albeit that it would appear at some stages in its working life to have been subdivided into a number of smaller yards.
- Notwithstanding the open sided nature of the proposed addition at ground floor, it is substantial in both height and depth and would appear unduly visually prominent in the context of the existing building, particularly given its position to the frontage. This will detract from the appearance of the building, including in views from the listed farmhouse and its immediate setting.
- Although I appreciate that the intention of the design may be to imitate a traditional hayloft or similar, this pastiche design detracts from the original architecture of the building, and confuses its narrative. This detracts from both its significance as a potential NDHA and its contribution to the historic farmstead and the setting of Rashes Farmhouse.

For these reasons, I would consider that the proposal detracts from the significance of the building as a potential NDHA, and from the positive contribution which it makes to the setting of Rashes Farmhouse. This will be contrary to the requirements of District Plan Policy DP34. In terms of the NPPF, the further information provided by a Heritage Statement may be helpful in determining the level of harm caused, but I would expect this to fall within the less than substantial scale in terms of the impact through setting on Rashes Farmhouse, so that paragraph 208 will apply. In terms of the NDHA and paragraph 209 of the NPPF, the level of harm caused may be relatively high, to an asset of perhaps a mid level of significance in the local context, but again the findings of an appropriately detailed HS will be useful in providing a more specific assessment.

Based on our site visit, I would suggest that an appropriately scaled and designed rear addition to the building may possibly be more favourably viewed. The applicant may be best advised to withdraw the current application and consider seeking advice from a heritage consultant, before approaching us for pre-application discussions on an alternative proposal.

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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