

From: Emily Wade <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 03 February 2026 15:52:10 UTC+00:00
To: "Catherine Cardin" <Catherine.Cardin@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: DM/25/2966 Pickeridge Cottage, Cob Lane, Ardingly

Hi Cathy

Comments on the above planning application. My apologies for the delay in getting these to you, which has been caused by pressure of other work.

The application site, Pickeridge Cottage, is a former farm cottage associated with Pickeridge. This is a historic farmstead located in a rural position outside Ardingly. It includes the former farmhouse, which dates from the 16th century and is Grade II listed, and a number of ancillary buildings including a modern workshop adjacent to the house, a range of more historic former farm buildings dating from the 19th century or earlier to the south of this, and to the south again the cottage. This building dates from the second half of the 20th century. Pickeridge is recorded in the West Sussex Historic Farmstead and Landscape Character assessment as a historic farmstead of the Medieval period. A public right of way (PROW) runs north-south past the eastern side of the house, farmstead and cottage, and onwards into the surrounding countryside. There are clear views of the farmstead from this pathway, including of Pickeridge Cottage, which is particularly prominent in views looking towards the grouping from the countryside to the south. There are also longer distance views of the farmstead looking across the valley from Cob Lane (which I note are not considered in the LVIA).

Based on the information in front of us, Pickeridge house would be considered to possess architectural value based on its construction and craftsmanship, historical illustrative value as a good example of a 16th century Sussex farmhouse, and aesthetic value based in part on the use of vernacular materials viewed within the landscape from which they were drawn. The surviving rural setting of the house therefore makes a strong positive contribution to the special interest of the house and how this is appreciated, in particular those parts of that interest which are drawn from historical illustrative and aesthetic values. The surviving historic farm buildings within the historic farmstead also have group value with the farmhouse, and contribute positively to its setting, although this contribution may be reduced by modern alterations.

The current proposal is for demolition of the Cottage and construction in its place of a 4 bedroom house. The new dwelling is shown as a contemporary house of part 2, part 1 storey, set over an enlarged footprint and stepping down the hill to the west. The building consists of two principle parallel ranges, with a linking volume with roof garden over.

Firstly, the submitted Heritage Statement is inadequate in that it does not properly address the impact of the proposal, through setting, on the listed former farmhouse. It

states only that the replacement dwelling is completely hidden from the listed building, which is possibly true in terms of views from Pickeridge itself, but ignores the impact of the development on other aspects of the setting of the listed building as the context within which it is appreciated, including views towards the site from the close garden setting of the former farmhouse, views from the adjacent fields which will include both the site and the listed building and kinetic views of the site and historic farmstead from the adjacent PROW which represent the most significant public experience of the heritage asset. I would recommend that a revised and expanded heritage statement is prepared to inform and accompany any revised proposal; this should be prepared according to the staged approach to assessment within the setting of a heritage asset as set out in the relevant Historic England guidance GPA Note 3 '*The Setting of Heritage Assets*'.

Based on the information before us, it appears that Pickeridge Cottage is a relatively modern addition to the farmstead, and although it might be considered to make a slight contribution to an understanding of its later evolution, it is not of any particular architectural quality. I would consider it on balance to detract from the setting of the listed farmhouse and the more historic ancillary buildings within the grouping. I would not therefore have any objection in principle to its demolition and replacement.

In terms of the replacement building, I have concerns regarding the scale, massing, footprint, and detailed design of the new house.

In terms of the scale, massing and footprint of the proposed new dwelling, I note that it is lower than the existing house but over an enlarged footprint, being both wider north to south in the plot and deeper east to west. Although lower in height than the existing Cottage, the two linked ranges represent a substantial building which in my opinion has the potential to be unduly prominent in the landscape setting of the historic farmstead, including in views from the gardens to the farmhouse and from the adjacent fields, and in kinetic views from the adjacent PROW, as well potentially as longer views of the farm from Cob Lane.

In a historic farmstead of this nature, and in particular in one where a traditional threshing barn is absent, one would expect the farmhouse to be the largest and most architecturally significant building within the grouping, with the working farm buildings having an ancillary role reflected in a subordinate scale and plainer, more functional appearance. Farm cottages, providing housing for agricultural workers or family members, are sometimes part of such farmsteads and would also be typically subservient in scale and appearance to the main house. In my opinion, in this context the scale and architectural character of the proposed replacement dwelling raise concerns that it will appear unduly prominent and assertive within the farmstead grouping, disrupting its traditional hierarchy.

I also have concerns that notwithstanding the existing situation the orientation of the proposed replacement building, in facing away from the farm access (and PROW), has a poor relationship with what constitutes the public realm, in this context. The eastern

side elevation, which faces onto the access/PROW, has a clearly secondary appearance and includes features such as a prominent flue. In my opinion, the orientation and/or treatment of this part of the building require reconsideration to present a more active, and attractive public façade, whilst also appearing appropriately subordinate to the historic farmhouse.

In terms of the detailed architectural treatment of the elevations to the new building, whilst a contemporary design may be acceptable in principle, it will be important that the design and materials respond appropriately to the context. Some elements of the current proposal are of concern in these terms, in my opinion:

- The elevations have a somewhat disjointed appearance, partly due to a lack of consistent emphasis to openings/fenestration.
- The scale of openings does not relate well to the historic context; traditional farm buildings in particular will tend to have a high ratio of solid to void in this respect, and the same applies to Pickeridge, with the exception of its modern garden room extension. This is not sympathetic to the 'rural/agricultural' aesthetic which the scheme appears to be aiming for.
- The number and scale of openings at first floor in particular is also of potential concern in terms of exacerbating the undue visual prominence of the development from the adjacent PROW, and of light spill into the surrounding rural landscape.
- The projecting dormer/oriel windows to the east elevation appear clumsy and do not relate to the existing farmstead buildings, where no similar features are present.
- The high privacy screen to the northern side of the roof garden above the link is an incongruous feature and adds visual clutter, as do the railings to the opposite side- the inclusion of the roof garden appears to be designing in a problem, and seems unnecessary given the extent of gardens around the building. I would suggest this is removed in favour of a simple green roof.
- In terms of materials red zinc roofing may possibly be acceptable, but I would like to see a sample due to the extent of its use. It may be that this adds to the visual prominence/incongruity of the development, and it could be better settled into its context by the use of a clay tile to match the adjacent farm buildings. To the elevations, black timber cladding is shown above brick. Although timber cladding is a traditionally used material in rural Sussex, the extent of the black cladding may increase the apparent bulk of the building, and I would question whether natural timber might be more appropriate? This aspect of the proposal requires further consideration.

The proposal includes a landscaping plan for the garden around the Cottage, which would be extended to include part of the existing farmhouse garden, to accommodate the increased footprint of the dwelling. It would be helpful if a comparably detailed plan of the existing situation could be provided so that the impact of the development can be fully assessed, including any changes to the nature and extent of hard surfacing, and to vegetation. In relation to soft landscaping, the High Weald AONB Unit has recently published guidance on soft landscaping and planting plans in development proposals

which will be relevant- it would also be useful if the applicant can confirm how this guidance has been adhered to in the layout and planting scheme, making any revisions which may be necessary to achieve this. (Link below)

[HWNL-Soft-Landscaping-in-development-proposals-published-version.pdf](#)

In summary, although the principle of the development may be acceptable, the current scheme requires further supporting information, including a fully detailed Heritage Statement, as well as reconsideration and revision to ensure that the proposed replacement dwelling preserves the setting and special interest of Pickeridge farmhouse and the associated historic farmstead. This is to ensure that the proposal meets the requirements of District Plan Policy DP34 and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.

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>

Emily Wade Ma MSc
Conservation Officer
Planning Services
Tel: +44 (0)1444 477385
emily.wade@midsussex.gov.uk <http://www.midsussex.gov.uk>



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