

From: Emily Wade <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 19 August 2025 14:40:11 UTC+01:00
To: "Stefan Galyas" <Stefan.Galyas@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: Hambrook School, Marle Place, BH DM/25/1114

Hi Stefan

Initial comments on the above planning application.

The application site, Hambrook School, is a large detached building, formerly a substantial house known as Marle Place, and before that Woodlands. Prior to this, two dwellings stood on the site, and it appears that these two buildings may have been linked to create the larger house. The building as existing today appears to date from the early-mid 19th century, although extended and altered. Since the mid 20th century it has been in a variety of educational uses, and has large extensions to the north relating to this purpose. To the south, beyond the grounds of the school, is Marle Place Park, a public park created during the later part of the 20th century from the former gardens to the house.

The building is the only surviving example of a number of large houses that stood to the southern side of Leylands Road during the 19th century, and is one of the older buildings in the area.

The building would be considered to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the St. John's Conservation Area, particularly in respect of the elevation facing south over the Park. The views looking from the Park towards the school allow not only an appreciation of this attractive façade of the building, but also of the former functional relationship between house and gardens.

The northern side of the building is more utilitarian in character, and more heavily altered, although the portico to the western elevation is of some character, and the southern boundary wall contributes positively to the street scene of Leylands Road. There is a public right of way (PROW) running north-south along the western boundary of the site, towards Upper St Johns Road.

Based on the age, architectural quality, and communal value of the building I would consider that it should be regarded as a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA) with potential for inclusion on a heritage local list of buildings of special architectural or historical interest within the local context. The building is also recognised as being of architectural or historic merit within the Neighbourhood Plan.

The current proposal, which is partially retrospective, is for the installation of a summer house to the south western corner of the gardens to the east of the building, and for the placement of play equipment within these gardens.

The summer house is modestly sized and discretely located to one corner of the gardens. It is of timber construction with a pitched felt roof and timber framed windows and doors. It is considered to have only a minor impact on the character of the garden space and is not considered contentious. The play equipment is fairly extensive, and the higher pieces may be visible in views looking into the gardens from the adjacent park. However, it is fairly lightweight in nature and should not appear unduly intrusive in views of the house. The majority of it is also of timber construction, which will be relatively sympathetic to the context, and is set into the existing grassed lawn. On balance, this aspect of the proposal is also not considered contentious.

The proposal is therefore considered to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the setting of the NDHA, meeting the requirements of District Plan Policies DP34 and DP35 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.

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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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