

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/24/2874	Case Officer:	Rachel Richardson
Application Type:	Full Application		
Proposal:	Proposed removal of the modern disused and redundant agricultural buildings and creation of an events venue through the erection of an events barn and open barn. Proposed use of redundant Grade II Listed farmhouse and Curtilage Listed Building to provide ancillary accommodation to serve the events venue. Proposed erection of estate barn to assist with operation of events venue and retained agricultural land. Provision of driveway and parking area to north of proposed events venue, plus ancillary infrastructure including surface and foul water drainage strategy. Provision of ecological enhancements and hard and soft landscaping.		
Site:	Twineham Court Farm, Bob Lane, Twineham, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 5NH, ,		
Validation Date	5 Dec 2024	Overall Expiry Date:	2 Mar 2026
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	19 Mar 2026
Target Date:	6 Mar 2025	Recommending Officer Signature:	Rachel Richardson

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	8
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Signed and Agreed By:	Joanne Fisher	Date:	20 Mar 2026
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/24/2874

Twineham Court Farm, Bob Lane, Twineham, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 5NH, Proposed removal of the modern disused and redundant agricultural buildings and creation of an events venue through the erection of an events barn and open barn. Proposed use of redundant Grade II Listed farmhouse and Curtilage Listed Building to provide ancillary accommodation to serve the events venue. Proposed erection of estate barn to assist with operation of events venue and retained agricultural land. Provision of driveway and parking area to north of proposed events venue, plus ancillary infrastructure including surface and foul water drainage strategy. Provision of ecological enhancements and hard and soft landscaping.
Telbridge Properties Limited

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

Letters of objection have been received from 8 nearby households. Their concerns are summarised as follows:

- o Objection to the proposed use as a wedding venue with up to 61 events PA and 200 guests although this could increase in the future.
- o Bob Lane is a single width rural road with few passing places unsuitable for increased traffic for the use proposed. It will be prejudicial to highway safety for all users. It also floods.
- o A traffic management plan has not been provided
- o Harmful noise disturbance which will be prevalent in this countryside location, and windows (as stated in the planning statement at 6.25) are unlikely to be kept shut.
- o Unacceptable light pollution
- o The business plan does not seem financially viable
- o This is not a sustainable location and the use will be solely reliant on use of a car/van etc as there is no public transport available
- o If permission is granted there should be a condition to prevent fireworks and for a CEMP to manage construction vehicles.
- o Loss of a dwelling in the countryside given that the proposed use of the farmhouse would be ancillary to the events venue.
- o Adverse effect on residential amenity for nearby households
- o A small housing development would be preferable to the development proposed
- o It is not needed as there is already a wedding venue in Bolney Chapel Lane.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

MSDC Conservation Officer: No objection subject to planning conditions.

MSDC Environmental Protection: Following review of the applicant's response to my previous comments and the accompanying technical note prepared by Phlorum (dated 28 May 2025) as well as the updated noise report, I am now satisfied that the proposed development can be supported, subject to appropriate planning conditions.

MSDC Contaminated Land: Recommends approval subject to conditions.

MSDC Trees and Landscape: No objection subject to condition for the development to be carried out in accordance with the AMS, AIA particularly with regard to arboricultural supervision and tree protection, all of which should be conditioned.

MSDC Flood Risk and Drainage: No objection subject to conditions.

WSCC Lead Local Flood Authority: No objection, recommends conditions.

WSCC Highway Authority: No objection subject to conditions and informative note.

WSCC Rights of Way: No objection.

WSCC Water and Access: Evidence is required to show suitable access and turning facility for a fire appliance to attend these change of use buildings and farm house, to ensure they comply with the requirements of AD-B Volume 2: B5 section 15.

Place Services Ecology: No objection subject to conditions.

Place Services Landscape Consultant: No objection subject to conditions.

NatureSpace Partnership: The site is high risk and the applicant needs to obtain a licence to undertake works.

PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

Major concerns regarding the proposal to create a wedding/events venue on this site, considering it to be a totally unsuitable location.

As we stated in our submission of 20th December 2024, the Parish Council considers that a far more suitable use of this site would be a small development of traditional farmyard style dwellings. This would result in far less impact to both the countryside and the neighbours.

INTRODUCTION

Permission is sought for the proposed removal of the modern disused and redundant agricultural buildings and creation of an events venue through the erection of an events barn and open barn. Proposed use of redundant Grade II Listed farmhouse and Curtilage Listed Building to provide ancillary accommodation to serve the events venue. Proposed erection of estate barn to assist with operation of events venue and retained agricultural land. Creation of new vehicular access onto Bob Lane and provision of driveway and parking area, plus ancillary infrastructure including surface and foul water drainage strategy. Provision of ecological enhancements and hard and soft landscaping.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

DM/23/2386 - Residential conversion of curtilage listed building to residential annex for purposes ancillary to the listed farmhouse. Permission 30.11.2023

DM/23/2385 - Listed Building Consent for the above. Consent approved 30.11.2023

DM/21/3108 - External and internal alterations to Twineham Court Farmhouse. Permission 06.01.2023

There is a concurrent listed building consent application for this proposal under reference DM/24/2839.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application site at Twineham Court Farm comprises an existing agricultural unit of approximately 3.22 hectares.

The site comprises a collection of modern disused and redundant agricultural buildings that are in a poor state of disrepair, plus a Grade II Listed farmhouse and Grade II Curtilage Listed Building.

Vehicular access is provided via an access track that runs in a northern direction from Bob Lane, and the site stretches to the north-east where the Bolney electrical substation is located. An electricity pylon is located directly to the east of the site, and which is within the ownership of the applicant.

By way of background, the applicants statement confirms that, *'it is understood that the farm formed part of the Twineham Grange Estate until it was sold in the early 1960s. The National Grid acquired the site*

and surrounding land and in 1965 the development of the Bolney electrical sub-station commenced. Over the years the Bolney Electrical sub-station has expanded and now stretches to the north and west of Twineham Court Farm.

The applicant, Telbridge Properties Limited, acquired Twineham Court Farm, and given the restricted size of the agricultural unit coupled with the existing disused and redundant buildings that are in a poor state of repair, it was concluded that it would not be viable to continue the lawful agricultural operations at the site. As such, the intention of the applicant is to secure an alternative income stream to ensure the long-term financial viability of the site via the creation of an events venue.'

For the purposes of planning policy the site lies within the countryside and outside of the built-up area boundary, as defined in the District Plan. There is a PROW running in a north-south direction adjoining the eastern side of the Farm.

The site is also within the red zone for great crested newts.

APPLICATION DETAILS

Proposed events barn and open barn

This building consists of three ranges arranged in the shape of a 'T'. The northern range is orientated on an east west axis and measures approximately 21m in length by 7m deep with an overall ridge height of approximately 6.2m above ground level. A smaller range extends to the southern side of the northern wing, on a north-south axis. It measures about 7.7m in length and 6m deep. It would have an overall ridge height of about 5.6m. The third range is the largest barn and would be constructed on the same building line as the eastern elevation of the smaller range it will adjoin. This range measures approximately 17m by 8m and will also be positioned on a north-south axis. It will have an overall ridge height of approximately 7.4m.

The elevations annotate that this building will have plain clay/concrete roof tiles with exposed rafter feet and black aluminium rainwater goods. The elevations will be timber clad over a brick plinth wall and oak framed fenestration.

This building will sit roughly on the same footprint location as barn 5 and Nissen Hut 2 as illustrated on the existing site layout/block plan. It will be located just to the eastern side of the curtilage listed proposed ancillary accommodation and proposed open barn. A courtyard area would be created between the events barn and open barn.

The proposed open barn will adjoin the northern side of the curtilage listed ancillary accommodation. This element of the proposal's measures approximately 13.6m by 5.5m with an overall ridge height of about 5m above ground level. This would replace Nissen Hut 1.

Proposed use of Listed Farmhouse and Curtilage building as ancillary accommodation to wedding venue

There are no physical alterations proposed as these have been granted under previous permissions as referred to above in the planning history.

Proposed Estate Barn

The proposed estate management building would sit to the northeast of the events venue building and eastern side of the parking area. It will provide facilities for the estate staff and ground keeping staff and will store the tractors and implements associated with maintaining the grounds.

This building has two wings with the larger of the two, orientated on an east-westerly axis and the second wing projecting to the south and from the eastern elevation, in a handed 'L' shaped arrangement. The main wing measures approximately 24m by 8m with an overall height of about 8m. The southern elevation of this building is shown with integrated solar pv panels in the sloping plane.

The range projecting to the south measures approximately 12.8m by 8m and would have a height of about 6m above ground level.

Unlike the events venue this building will have pale grey aluminium windows and oak doors.

This building would replace barns 3 and 4 and a dilapidated outbuilding, as shown on the existing site layout/ block plan.

The proposed barns will all have gable ends to match the existing farmhouse and annex buildings.

Access, driveway and parking

The proposal involves utilising the existing access off Bob Lane.

The scheme has been amended and has relocated the parking area to the north of the listed farmhouse and proposed events venue, at the rear of the site. The application form states that 62 additional parking spaces are proposed in addition to the existing 4 spaces.

Four electric vehicle charging points will be installed to the visitor car park.

Landscaping

- o Retention of the remaining open land within the northern and north-western part of the site for agricultural purposes such as live-stock grazing.

- o Wildflower (local native species) to be planted as natural groundcover. Trees will also be planted as shown on the plans.

- o The access drive will be fully permeable compacted Breedon stone gravel or similar material.

- o The existing pond will be retained and cleared of all debris. The pond will become a focal point for the main events barn and estate managers barn.

- o Provision of ecological enhancements to meet the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND LIST OF POLICIES

Planning legislation holds that the determination of a planning application shall be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Specifically Section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 states:

'In dealing with such an application the authority shall have regard to:

- a) The provisions of the development plan, so far as material to application,*
- b) Any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application, and*
- c) Any other material considerations.'*

Section 38(6) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 provides:

'If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.'

The requirement to determine applications "in accordance with the plan" does not mean applications must comply with each and every policy, but is to be approached on the basis of the plan taken as a whole. This reflects the fact, acknowledged by the Courts, that development plans can have broad statements of policy, many of which may be mutually irreconcilable so that in a particular case one must give way to another.

Under section 38(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 if a policy contained in a development plan for an area conflicts with another policy in the development plan, the conflict must be resolved in favour of the policy which is contained in the last document to be adopted, approved or published.

Using this as the starting point the development plan for this part of Mid Sussex consists of the District Plan, Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) and Twineham Neighbourhood Plan.

National policy (which is contained in the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Policy Guidance) does not form part of the development plan, but is an important material consideration.

Mid Sussex District Plan

The District Plan was adopted at Full Council on 28th March 2018.

Relevant policies:

DP1 - Sustainable Economic Development
DP12 - Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside
DP14 - Sustainable Rural Development and the Rural Economy
DP15 - New Homes in the Countryside
DP17 - Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC
DP21 - Transport
DP26 - Character and Design
DP29 - Noise, Air and Light Pollution
DP34 - Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets
DP38 - Biodiversity
DP39 - Sustainable Design and Construction
DP41 - Flood Risk and Drainage

Site Allocations DPD

The SADPD was adopted on 29th June 2022. It allocates sufficient housing and employment land to meet identified needs to 2031.

Relevant policies.

None.

Neighbourhood Plan

The Twineham Neighbourhood Plan was made on 24 March 2016.

Relevant policies:

TNP2 - Design
TNP3 Employment and the Local Economy
TNP4 - Landscape and Environment

Other Legislation

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW) 2000

Other Material Considerations

Mid Sussex District Plan 2021 - 2039 - Submission Draft (Regulation 19)

The District Council is reviewing and updating the District Plan. Upon adoption, the new District Plan 2021 - 2039 will replace the current District Plan 2014-2031 and its policies will have full weight. In accordance with the NPPF, Local Planning Authorities may give weight to relevant policies of the emerging plan according to the stage of preparation; the extent to which there are unresolved objections to the relevant policies; and the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the NPPF. The draft District Plan 2021-2039 (Regulation 19) is currently at Examination and the stage 1 hearings were concluded on the 31st October 2024. There are unresolved objections to some of the Policies in the draft District Plan and as such, only minimal weight can be given to the Plan and this planning application has been assessed against the policies of the adopted District Plan.

Relevant policies:

DPS6 - Health and Wellbeing
DPC1 - Protection and enhancement of the countryside
DPC6 - Ashdown Forest
DPN7 - Noise Impacts
DPN8 - Light Impacts and Dark Skies
DPB1 - Character and Design
DPT3 - Active and Sustainable Travel

Mid Sussex Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

The Council has adopted a 'Mid Sussex Design Guide' SPD that aims to help deliver high quality development across the district that responds appropriately to its context and is inclusive and sustainable. The Design Guide was adopted by Council on 4th November 2020 as an SPD for use in the consideration and determination of planning applications. The SPD is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024)

The NPPF sets out the government's policy in order to ensure that the planning system contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 sets out the three objectives to sustainable development, such that the planning system needs to perform an economic objective, a social objective and an environmental objective.

Paragraph 12 of the NPPF states '*The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.*'

Paragraph 39 of the NPPF states '*Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.*'

With specific reference to decision-taking paragraph 48 states that planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

ASSESSMENT

It is considered that the main issues that need to be considered in the determination of this application are as follows;

- o Principle
- o Design and Impact on Landscape Character of the Area
- o Impact on Setting of Listed Buildings

- o Impact on Residential Amenity
- o Noise, Air and Light Pollution
- o Transport
- o Flood Risk and Drainage
- o Sustainability
- o Ashdown Forest
- o Trees
- o Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain
- o Other (Fire, Water and Access)

Principle

Policy DP12 in the DP is the starting point and this policy allows for development in the countryside provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character.

DP policy DP1 allows for small scale economic development in the countryside, including tourism and gives priority to the re-use or adaptation of rural buildings for business (in accordance with Development in the Countryside policies). This is also in response to environmental, ecological and landscape constraints having regard to DP26, DP37 and DP38.

DP14 has a similar ethos to DP1 in supporting small scale economic development in the countryside, including tourism and also supports the re-use and adaptation of rural buildings for business use within the countryside provided it supports the sustainable growth and the vitality of the rural economy and where possible utilises previously developed sites. Diversification of activities on existing farm units will also be permitted provided they are of a scale consistent with the farm holding, inter alia.

TNP4 supports development that respects the local landscape quality to ensure that views and vistas are maintained where possible.

TNP3 (employment and the local economy) allows for *'the diversification of established agricultural businesses and buildings where it complements the existing farming enterprise and is suitable and appropriate to the existing character of the parish without compromising the local character of the built, natural, and historic environment of the parish, safeguards the amenities of adjoining properties and uses, does not create a severe impact on the local rural highway network, is not liable to flooding nor increases flooding elsewhere.'*

The NPPF is also relevant and at paragraph 85 states that *'significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.'*

Paragraph 88, states that *'planning policies and decisions should enable:*

The sustainable growth and expansion of all types of businesses in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed, beautiful new buildings.'

The planning statement confirms that the proposed events venue will comprise the diversification of Twineham Court Farm whilst at the same time retaining grazing land within the north and north western part of the site.

The application is accompanied by a business plan which states that the proposed business events and weddings could accommodate up to 200 guests and that this would make the business economically viable thereby comprising sustainable growth which positively contributes to the vitality of the rural economy within the Mid Sussex District.

It is accepted that existing farm buildings are dilapidated and now redundant and that the proposed development would comply in terms of principle with the above relevant policies, and subject to compliance with other specified policies.

The proposal would not result in the creation of any new dwellings. The farmhouse is an existing dwelling and there are no alterations proposed under this application to the farmhouse. The curtilage listed building adjacent to the proposed open barn has also previously been approved as a residential annex. Dwellings and holiday let accommodation both fall within the same Use Class, C3, in terms of planning law and as such, no change of use will result from this application proposal. It should also be noted that the conversion of the curtilage listed building has an extant planning permission for a residential annex. As such, there is no conflict with DP15 (new homes in the countryside) in this respect.

Design and Impact on the Landscape Character of the Area

Policy DP12 in the DP is the starting point and this policy allows for development in the countryside provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character.

Policy DP26 of the DP states:

'All development and surrounding spaces, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings and replacement dwellings, will be well designed and reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages while being sensitive to the countryside. All applicants will be required to demonstrate that development:

- o is of high quality design and layout and includes appropriate landscaping and greenspace;*
- o contributes positively to, and clearly defines, public and private realms and should normally be designed with active building frontages facing streets and public open spaces to animate and provide natural surveillance;*
- o creates a sense of place while addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape;*
- o protects open spaces, trees and gardens that contribute to the character of the area;*
- o protects valued townscapes and the separate identity and character of towns and villages;*
- o does not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings, including taking account of the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and noise, air and light pollution (see Policy DP29);*
- o creates a pedestrian-friendly layout that is safe, well connected, legible and accessible;*
- o incorporates well integrated parking that does not dominate the street environment, particularly where high density housing is proposed;*
- o positively addresses sustainability considerations in the layout and the building design;*
- o take the opportunity to encourage community interaction by creating layouts with a strong neighbourhood focus/centre; larger (300+ unit) schemes will also normally be expected to incorporate a mixed use element;*
- o optimises the potential of the site to accommodate development.'*

Policy TNP4 states:

New development will be supported which is in accordance with other policies of the plan and:

TNP4.1 Respects local landscape quality ensuring that views and vistas are maintained wherever possible.

TNP4.2 Takes every opportunity, where practicable and viable, to incorporate features that improve its environmental performance thereby reducing carbon emissions. These can include both energy efficiency measures and sources of renewable energy.

TNP4.3 All development schemes submitted must be accompanied by a landscaping scheme which aims to retain amenity and historic trees and hedges. New tree and hedge planting of native species will be encouraged throughout Twineham Parish.'

Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that:

'The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.'

Paragraph 187 b) states that decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, inter alia.

The applicants have confirmed that, *'The application has been amended insofar as the proposed parking area has been relocated from the southern part of the site to the north of the listed Farmhouse and proposed events venue. The parking provision which was adjacent to the existing access track has also been omitted from the scheme.'*

The form and layout of the proposed estates barn have also been amended so that it now appears as an L-shaped building with a reduced height to ridge. We consider that the updated estates barn overcomes the Conservation Officer's concern regarding the scale, height, bulk and monolithic form of the originally submitted estates barn.'

The Councils Landscape Consultant raises no objection in principle to the design and layout in terms of the visual impact of the proposed development on the landscape character of the area.

The proposed buildings will be consolidated on a similar footprint to existing farm buildings and hard surfaces. The proposed buildings are considered to be of rural character in terms of their scale form and appearance. As said above the parking will be to the northern and rear side of the buildings and not prominent from public vantage points. It should be noted that the Conservation Officer has no objection in terms of impact on setting of the listed buildings and is satisfied that the proposed development is acceptable in this location.

Landscaping proposals are also included as part of the scheme including species rich grassland, meadowgrass, ornamental grass planting, evergreen hedging, aquatic planting and tree planting. Any planning permission would include planning conditions as recommended by the landscape consultant to ensure the planting is carried out and thereafter maintained.

As such, it is considered that from a design and landscape character issue, the proposed development is acceptable and meets policy criteria.

Impact on Setting of Listed Buildings

S. 66 (2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that 'In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.'

DP34 states:

that development will be required to protect listed building's and their settings and this will be achieved by ensuring that:

- o 'A thorough understanding of the significance of the listed building and its setting has been demonstrated. This will be proportionate to the importance of the building and potential impact of the proposal;*
- o Alterations or extensions to a listed building respect its historic form, scale, setting, significance and fabric. Proposals for the conversion or change of use of a listed building retain its significance and character whilst ensuring that the building remains in a viable use;*
- o Traditional building materials and construction techniques are normally used. The installation of uPVC windows and doors will not be acceptable;*
- o Satellite antennae, solar panels or other renewable energy installations are not sited in a prominent location, and where possible within the curtilage rather than on the building itself;*
- o Special regard is given to protecting the setting of a listed building;*
- o Where the historic fabric of a building may be affected by alterations or other proposals, the applicant is expected to fund the recording or exploratory opening up of historic fabric.*

Other Heritage Assets

Development that retains buildings which are not listed but are of architectural or historic merit, or which make a significant and positive contribution to the street scene will be permitted in preference to their demolition and redevelopment.

The Council will seek to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the character and quality of life of the District. Significance can be defined as the special interest of a heritage asset, which may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic.

Proposals affecting such heritage assets will be considered in accordance with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and current Government guidance.'

Para's 212 - 215 of the NPPF states:

'212. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance

213. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;*
- b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional*

214. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use*

215. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.'

The application is supported by a Heritage and Impact Assessment. The Council's Conservation Officer has been involved in pre application discussions with the proposal and also throughout the duration of this application. As a result the scheme has been amended and there are no objections subject to planning conditions seeking further details for materials. The Conservation Officer comments are as follows:

The proposal has been amended to address concerns previously raised.

- The form of the estate barn has been amended to show an L shaped footprint, with one wing reduced in height. In my opinion this successfully addresses concerns regarding the scale and bulk of the building. Its elevational design and materials, subject to further detail which could be required by condition and the point below, are also considered acceptable. This aspect of the proposal is now considered to preserve the setting of the historic farmstead. With respect to the roofing materials the elevations submitted indicate clay or concrete roof tiles- I would advise that concrete tiles are unlikely to be favourably viewed and that details of an appropriate clay tile should be provided.

- The location of the associated car parking has been changed to locate this to the rear (north) of the farmstead as suggested. Although in other circumstances car parking of this extent within the context of a historic farmstead would be likely to be considered contentious, as this is largely confined to the existing area of dilapidated 20th century former farm buildings and associated existing hard standing, the principle in this instance is considered acceptable in its impact on the surviving historic elements of the farmstead. The proposed car parking is also shown as screened by surrounding planting, which will further mitigate this impact, subject to detail. This further detail should be required by condition, and I would advise that that this should include surfacing materials suitable to the agricultural/rural context, and if additional planting between the rows of parking bays within the car park, to break up the expanse of hard standing and soften the appearance of the area.

- The point above w.r.t roofing material to the estate barn applies equally to the other new buildings on the site.

In summary, and subject to the above points w.r.t. materials and landscaping to the car parking area, which could possibly be dealt with adequately by condition with the Case Officer's agreement, the proposal is considered to preserve the setting and special interest of the listed farmhouse and curtilage listed former farm building. This meets the requirements of District Plan Policy DP34 and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.'

Officers agree with the comments of the Councils Conservation Officer and consider that the proposal would preserve the setting of the listed buildings.

It is therefore considered that in terms of the impact on the setting of the listed farmhouse and curtilage listed annex, the proposal is compliant with the above relevant policies.

Impact on Residential Amenity

DP26 as stated above requires that significant harm is not caused by the development proposal, to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings, including taking account of the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and noise, air and light pollution.

DP29 refers to noise sensitive development proposals and that development should be controlled to minimise the impact of noise on health and quality of life.

Neighbours have raised concerns about harmful noise disturbance which will be prevalent in this countryside location, and windows (as stated in the planning statement at 6.25) are unlikely to be kept shut. Concerns have also been raised about unacceptable light pollution.

The houses closest to the farm buildings are approximately 159m away and these are Grange Cottages to the south of the farm and opposite the site entrance.

As such and as the planning statement confirms there will be no significant harm resulting to the amenity of these houses in terms of overlooking/loss of privacy, loss of outlook, and daylight and sunlight as a result of any overshadowing from the development proposal.

In terms of noise, the application is accompanied with a Noise Assessment (12765A V1), prepared by Phlorum Limited. The Noise Assessment concludes that with appropriate noise mitigation measures for any music noise within the events venue, the noise levels can be controlled to be within acceptable levels at the nearest residential properties.

The Planning Statement at para 6.26 confirms that,

'The noise mitigation measures referred to within the Noise Assessment are the following:

- o Windows and doors at the events venue to be closed when music is playing;*
- o The music noise levels up to 23:00 hours to be controlled such that they do not exceed LAeq,15 min 90 dB at a distance of 5m from the speakers or sound tests undertaken on the day of the event to determine an appropriate noise limit that takes the individual sound system and speaker orientation into account;*

o The low frequency content (bass beat) to be controlled such that the noise does not exceed the guideline provided by the "Code of Practice on Environmental Noise at Concerts" of a level of 70 dB in either of the 63Hz or 125Hz octave frequency band at the nearest residential properties;
o The music sound system should be orientated such that the speakers face away from the nearest residential properties;
o The building structure at Twineham Court Farm to have no acoustically weak elements such that the sound insulation provided by each building element (walls, ceilings, ventilation etc.) is equal or better than that provided by the closed windows and doors; and
o If music is played after 23:00 hours, the noise must be controlled such that music is not audible just outside of the nearest residential properties.'

The Councils Environmental Protection Officer raises no objection subject to a planning condition being imposed on any planning permission.

The Environmental Protection Officer has confirmed that 'The applicant has confirmed that all music will cease by 23:00 hours and has committed to a range of mitigation measures to control noise breakout from the venue. These include the use of mechanical ventilation, closure of all windows and doors during music events, and the implementation of a Noise Management Plan (NMP) to govern operational practices.'

In terms of light pollution, the application does not propose any external lighting and the applicant has confirmed that they would be in agreement to a planning condition in relation to this matter.

As such, the proposed development is compliant with DP26 in terms of residential amenity and would not result in significant harm.

Transport

Policy DP21 of the Mid Sussex District Plan requires development to: be sustainably located to minimise the need for travel; promote alternative means of transport to the private car, including provision of suitable facilities for secure and safe cycle parking; not cause a severe cumulative impact in terms of road safety and increased traffic congestion; be designed to adoptable standards, or other standards as agreed by the Local Planning Authority, including road widths and size of garages; and provide adequate car parking in accordance with parking standards Neighbourhood Plan.

Paragraph 110 of the NPPF states that the planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of promoting sustainable transport objectives. Significant development should be focussed on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. It notes this can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. It notes however that opportunities to maximise sustainable transport options will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both Plan-making and decision-making.

Paragraph 115 of the NPPF states that, in determining planning applications it should be ensured that, amongst other things, appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport can be, or have been, taken up given the type of development and its location; and that safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users. Paragraph 116 of the NPPF states 'Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.'

The Local Highway Authority (LHA) has raised no objection subject to conditions and states in terms of access and safety the following:

'WSCC in its role as Local Highway Authority (LHA) has been reconsulted by the Local Planning Authority (LPA), following the applicant's submission of amended plans. The LHA previously provided comment on this application, dated 12/12/2024, raising no highway safety or capacity concerns. The amended plans have been assessed alongside the applicant's submitted Transport Statement, prepared by GTA Civils & Transport.'

In addition to providing comment on the amended plans, the LHA has also undertaken a site visit during the morning of 12/08/2025 between 11:00 - 11:30, the purpose being to assess the existing access point and surrounding roads that connect to the application site, and observe typical highway conditions in this location.

The revised plans now propose to utilise the existing vehicle access point on Bob Lane. WSCC mapping indicates that the required visibility splays of 32m (using the ascertained 85th percentile speeds) are achievable in both directions at the existing access point. Having visited the site, it is clear that splays in excess of 32m are achievable, although it was observed that existing vegetation to the east of the existing access should be maintained in order for visibility to remain unobstructed.

For the purposes of the site visit, I travelled the length of Bob Lane in both directions to gauge the suitability of the carriageway for such a use. Bob Lane was observed to be very lightly trafficked and generally low speed. In addition, there are intermittent passing places along the length of Bob Lane, and forward visibility was suitable to anticipate an approaching vehicle. As such, I did not encounter any issues in this regard. I am satisfied that the anticipated vehicle movements can be accommodated into the local highway network without adverse impact.

I have reviewed collision data provided to WSCC by Sussex Police from a period of the last five years, which reveals no recorded collisions attributed to road layout along the length of Bob Lane. Therefore, there is no evidence to suggest the existing access or highway has been operating unsafely, or that the proposals would exacerbate an existing safety concern.'

The Highway Authority at West Sussex County Council has no grounds to resist the proposal and has commented that it is not prejudicial to highway safety. An existing track would be used and there is adequate parking proposed and turning within the site (78 spaces).

Your Officer has no reason to disagree with the above and the views of the LHA are accepted.

As such, and in relation to this issue, the proposal is in accordance with DP21 and national guidance within the NPPF.

Flood Risk and Drainage

Policy DP41 of the MSDP deals with flood risk and drainage matters and states the following:

'Proposals for development will need to follow a sequential risk-based approach, ensure development is safe across its lifetime and not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. The District Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) should be used to identify areas at present and future flood risk from a range of sources including fluvial (rivers and streams), surface water (pluvial), groundwater, infrastructure and reservoirs.

Particular attention will be paid to those areas of the District that have experienced flooding in the past and proposals for development should seek to reduce the risk of flooding by achieving a reduction from existing run-off rates.'

The application is accompanied by a SUDS and Foul Drainage Assessment, an including FRA as well as a drainage technical note 1.

WSCC LLFA has confirmed, *This is a full application therefore the level of detail submitted raised concerns that there was several issues with the Drainage Strategy which could increase flood risk elsewhere.*

The clarification provided addresses the LLFA's previous concerns and therefore, we have no objection subject to conditions.'

A SuDS & Foul Drainage Assessment confirms that surface water runoff from the new events venue will be directed to 2no. new attenuation ponds in the southern part of the site. These ponds have been

designed to accommodate sufficient storage volume to attenuate all events up to and including the 1 in 100 year +45% climate change event.

The proposed foul drainage solution is directly comparable to the previous foul drainage strategy granted planning permission for Twineham Court Farm (DM/23/2386 refers).

Your Officer does not dispute the recommendation of WSCC LLFA and considers that the proposed development in terms of flood risk and drainage is acceptable in terms of DP41.

Sustainability

Policy DP39 of the District Plan states:

'All development proposals must seek to improve the sustainability of development and should where appropriate and feasible according to the type and size of development and location, incorporate the following measures:

- Minimise energy use through the design and layout of the scheme including through the use of natural lighting and ventilation;*
- Explore opportunities for efficient energy supply through the use of communal heating networks where viable and feasible;*
- Use renewable sources of energy;*
- Maximise efficient use of resources, including minimising waste and maximising recycling/ re-use of materials through both construction and occupation;*
- Limit water use to 110 litres/person/day in accordance with Policy DP42: Water Infrastructure and the Water Environment;*
- Demonstrate how the risks associated with future climate change have been planned for as part of the layout of the scheme and design of its buildings to ensure its longer term resilience.'*

Principle DG37 of the Council's Design Guide deals with 'sustainable buildings' and states;

'The Council welcomes innovative and inventive designs that respond to the sustainability agenda by minimising the use of resources and energy both through building construction and after completion.'

It lists a number of issues that designers should consider, including, amongst others, the incorporation of renewable energy technologies.

Paragraph 164(b) of the NPPF seeks to ensure new development helps, 'to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design.' In determining planning applications paragraph 166(b) expects new development to, 'take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption.' Paragraph 164 states that LPA's should give significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings, including non-domestic.

The proposed development includes energy and water efficiency measures; uses quality materials, to be sustainably and locally sourced where feasible; will install solar panels on the estate management building as well as providing 4 no. electric car charging points. There will also be ultra-low energy light fittings and fixtures throughout the proposed development.

Under the sustainability objectives of paragraph 8 in the NPPF, the proposed development will help to contribute towards the local economy by providing jobs for construction workers and through the acquisition of locally sourced materials and building supplies/machinery as well as any jobs generated in association with the events use.

As such, it is considered that policy requirements are met and is therefore in accordance with MSDP policy DP39.

Ashdown Forest

Under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (the 'Habitats Regulations'), the competent authority - in this case, Mid Sussex District Council - has a duty to ensure

that any plans or projects that they regulate (including plan making and determining planning applications) will have no adverse effect on the integrity of a European site of nature conservation importance. The European site of focus is the Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

The potential effects of development on Ashdown Forest were assessed during the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) process for the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031. This process identified likely significant effects on the Ashdown Forest SPA from recreational disturbance and on the Ashdown Forest SAC from atmospheric pollution.

A Habitats Regulations Assessment has been undertaken for the proposed development in this planning application.

Recreational disturbance

Increased recreational activity arising from new residential development and related population growth is likely to disturb the protected near-ground and ground nesting birds on Ashdown Forest.

In accordance with advice from Natural England, the HRA for the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031, and as detailed in District Plan Policy DP17, mitigation measures are necessary to counteract the effects of a potential increase in recreational pressure and are required for developments resulting in a net increase in dwellings within a 7km zone of influence around the Ashdown Forest SPA. A Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) mitigation approach has been developed. This mitigation approach has been agreed with Natural England.

This planning application does not result in a net increase in dwellings within the 7km zone of influence and so mitigation is not required.

Atmospheric pollution

Increased traffic emissions as a consequence of new development may result in additional atmospheric pollution on Ashdown Forest. The main pollutant effects of interest are acid deposition and eutrophication by nitrogen deposition. High levels of nitrogen may detrimentally affect the composition of an ecosystem and lead to loss of species.

The potential effects of the proposed development are incorporated into the overall results of the transport model prepared for the Mid Sussex Transport Study, which indicates there would not be an overall impact on Ashdown Forest. This means that there is not considered to be a significant in combination effect on the Ashdown Forest SAC by this development proposal.

Conclusion of the Habitats Regulations Assessment

The Habitats Regulations Assessment concludes that there would be no likely significant effects, alone or in combination, on the Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC from the proposed development.

No mitigation is required in relation to the Ashdown Forest SPA or SAC.

A full HRA (that is, the appropriate assessment stage that ascertains the effect on integrity of the European site) of the proposed development is not required.

Trees

Policy DP37 in part states that:

'The District Council will support the protection and enhancement of trees, woodland and hedgerows, and encourage new planting. In particular, ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees will be protected.'

Development that will damage or lead to the loss of trees, woodland or hedgerows that contribute, either individually or as part of a group, to the visual amenity value or character of an area, and/ or that have landscape, historic or wildlife importance, will not normally be permitted.

Proposals for new trees, woodland and hedgerows should be of suitable species, usually native, and where required for visual, noise or light screening purposes, trees, woodland and hedgerows should be of a size and species that will achieve this purpose.

Trees, woodland and hedgerows will be protected and enhanced by ensuring development:

- o incorporates existing important trees, woodland and hedgerows into the design of new development and its landscape scheme; and*
- o prevents damage to root systems and takes account of expected future growth; and*
- o where possible, incorporates retained trees, woodland and hedgerows within public open space rather than private space to safeguard their long-term management; and*
- o has appropriate protection measures throughout the development process; and*
- o takes opportunities to plant new trees, woodland and hedgerows within the new development to enhance on-site green infrastructure and increase resilience to the effects of climate change; and*
- o does not sever ecological corridors created by these assets.*
- o the condition and health of the trees; and*

Proposals for works to trees will be considered taking into account:

- o the contribution of the trees to the character and visual amenity of the local area; and*
- o the amenity and nature conservation value of the trees; and*
- o the extent and impact of the works; and*
- o any replanting proposals.'*

An Arboricultural Survey Report (StA 2078 AS Twineham Court Farm Rev-), and Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) and Method Statement (MS) (StA 2078 AIA AMS Twineham Court Farm Rev-), prepared by St Aubyn Tree Consultancy accompanies this application.

A total of 26 individual trees, 22 groups, 3 hedges and 1 woodland were surveyed as part of the Arboricultural Survey Report. The AIA and MS confirm that provided the recommendations as set out within the document are adhered to, then the proposed development will have a negligible impact on the health and longevity of the retained trees.

No trees will require removal to facilitate the proposed works and this is considered to be in accordance with the above policy criteria.

The Council's Tree Officer raises no objection to the proposal subject to adherence to the tree reports.

The proposal thereby complies with Policy DP37 of the District Plan.

Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain

Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) lists species of animal (other than birds) which are provided special protection under the Act. Under Section 13 of the Act, all wild plants are protected from being uprooted without the consent of the landowner. In addition to the protection afforded by the Act, certain species are also covered by European legislation. These species are listed in Schedule 2 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, 7c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended).

Policy DP38 states in part that biodiversity will be protected and enhanced by ensuring development,

- 'Contributes and takes opportunities to improve, enhance, manage and restore biodiversity and green infrastructure, so that there is a net gain in biodiversity, including through creating new designated sites and locally relevant habitats, and incorporating biodiversity features within developments; and*
- o Protects existing biodiversity, so that there is no net loss of biodiversity. Appropriate measures should be taken to avoid and reduce disturbance to sensitive habitats and*
- o species. Unavoidable damage to biodiversity must be offset through ecological*
- o enhancements and mitigation measures (or compensation measures in exceptional*
- o circumstances); and*

o Minimises habitat and species fragmentation and maximises opportunities to enhance and restore ecological corridors to connect natural habitats and increase coherence and resilience; and
o Promotes the restoration, management and expansion of priority habitats in the District; and
o Avoids damage to, protects and enhances the special characteristics of internationally designated Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation; nationally designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; and locally designated Sites of Nature Conservation Importance, Local Nature Reserves and Ancient Woodland or to other areas identified as being of nature conservation or geological interest, including wildlife corridors, aged or veteran trees, Biodiversity Opportunity Areas, and Nature Improvement Areas.'

The Council's Ecology Consultant raises no objection subject to planning conditions. The applicants addendum to their planning statement confirms;

'The submitted Update Ecological Walkover (19 May 2025), prepared by CT Ecology Ltd has been provided in response to the Place Services Ecology consultee comments, whereby there is a 'temporary holding objection' pending further information on European Protected Species, protected species and habitats and mandatory BNG.

The document confirms that based on the results of the updated ecology walkover study, the broad habitat types and associated features supported remain the same as those recorded within the original Preliminary Ecological Appraisal undertaken during 2023. The submitted Update Ecological Walkover concludes the following:

o ...'the recommendations made in the original PEA report together with the results of the protected species surveys and associated mitigation measures remain valid for the site.'

It is therefore considered that the ecological information provided in support of the application is sufficient to overcome this temporary holding objection raised by the Place Services Ecology consultee comments.

In respect of Great Crested Newts, NatureSpace has confirmed that the applicant has submitted the correct documents in relation for the district licensing and has recommended a number of conditions and an informative in relation to this.

In terms of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), CT Ecology Ltd have prepared an updated BNG Assessment (Revision 2) (and BNG Metric) that is based on the updated drawings package.

The updated BNG Assessment confirms that the total net % change for the proposed development area has increased from +31.08% to +34.96% of habitat units, with a decrease from +2312.50% to +623.75% of hedgerow units when compared to the originally submitted BNG Assessment.

Notwithstanding, these figures still confirm a significant net gain in biodiversity as a result of the proposed development, and this still meets the statutory provisions as set within the BNG legislation.'

Biodiversity net gain is required under a statutory framework introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Under the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain this application is deemed to have been granted subject to the biodiversity net gain condition for development to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat.

The biodiversity net gain condition is set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Schedule 7A, Part 2, 13 (2). It states:

'The condition is that the development may not be begun unless—

- (a) a biodiversity gain plan has been submitted to the planning authority (see paragraph 14), and*
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan (see paragraph 15)'.*

The total area of habitat to be lost equates to 0.48ha which includes 0.02ha ruderal/ephemeral vegetation; 0.13ha scrub; 0.12ha modified grassland. A single, ornamental hedgerow measuring 8m in length will also be removed. The following habitat features will be incorporated post development:

- o a minimum of 0.3ha existing grassland will be enhanced through overseeding with a
- o wildflower grassland mix with on-going management;
- o the on-site pond will be enhanced through management and aquatic planting;
- o a minimum of 0.075ha mixed native scrub will be planted around the site to include in the
- o north of the site to extend areas of retained scrub;
- o a minimum of 0.079ha grassland will be created, comprising a mix of species-rich
- o grassland, and wildflower meadow areas;
- o two attenuation ponds will be created in the south of the site. These will be constructed
- o with wildlife in mind, to include associated marginal and emergent planting;
- o planting will include at least 10 new (small) trees to include native specimens comprising
- o focal and open space trees; and
- o new hedgerow planting in the north of the site to include at least one native hedge.

Other enhancements which are not factored into the biodiversity metric include features such as bird boxes, bat boxes and log piles. Also, due to the distribution of confirmed great crested newt ponds to the east and south-west of the application site, works must proceed under either a DLL from Nature Space or a PSML from Natural England in order to legally disturb areas of terrestrial habitat. Appropriate conditions are recommended for any planning permission.

It is considered the proposed on-site provision of BNG meets the necessary requirements and is policy compliant.

Other

In respect of fire, access and water, the applicants have confirmed that,
'The amended scheme allows for a fire truck to safely enter the site and directly access all existing and proposed buildings and areas throughout the site.'

This would be achieved via use of the existing and proposed access driveways. As such, we consider the comments provided by the West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service are appropriately overcome in this regard.'

No further response has been provided by WSCC Fire and Water. However, such matters in relation to adequate water supply is covered by other legislation and is not a planning matter.

In terms of the PROW Officers comments which confirms no objection but comments that a S106 Agreement to secure financial contributions towards the upkeep of the adjacent footpath along the eastern boundary of the site. The applicants are of the view that there is no intention for a pedestrian link to be provided from the events venue to the footpath and there will not be any increased use of the footpath as a result of the proposed development and therefore no need for a S106 to address this issue. This is considered to be acceptable in the circumstances.

PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

Planning legislation requires the application to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. It is therefore necessary for the planning application to be assessed against the policies in the Development Plan and then to take account of other material planning considerations including the NPPF. The Development Plan in this instance consists of the Mid Sussex District Plan, the Site Allocations Development Plan Document and the Twineham Neighbourhood Plan.

Courts have confirmed that the Development Plan must be considered as a whole, not simply in relation to any one individual policy. It is therefore not the case that a proposal must accord with each and every policy within the Development Plan.

It is considered that the proposed development is acceptable and it is therefore recommended that permission be granted. The principle, design and impact on landscape character, listed building setting, residential amenity, noise and light pollution, highways, drainage, sustainability, Ashdown Forest, trees, ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain are all positive in the planning balance. The proposed use is compliant with all relevant policies mentioned above including DP1, DP12, DP14, DP15, DP17, DP21, DP26, DP29, DP34, DP37, DP38, DP39, DP41 and Neighbourhood Plan policies TNP2, TNP3 and TNP4, and national guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Rachel Richardson