

From: Emily Wade <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 09 January 2026 16:12:26 UTC+00:00
To: "Hamish Evans" <Hamish.Evans@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: DM/25/2991 and 2992 North Hall, Mallions Lane, Staplefield

Hi Hamish

Comments on the above planning and listed building consent applications.

North Hall is a Grade II listed building, a former farmhouse dating originally from the 14th century according to the submitted Heritage Statement, and located in a rural position to the south of Staplefield. A Grade II listed 18th century barn is located to the west of the farmhouse, and a number of other former farm buildings also survive grouped around the former farmyard to the north west of the house, which are likely to be regarded as curtilage listed, or in the case of the structure which is the subject of the current proposals, listed by attachment. North Hall is included in the West Sussex Historic Farmstead and Landscape Character assessment as a historic farmstead of the Medieval period.

The current pre-application proposal relates to a two storey outbuilding attached to the northwest corner of the house. The building, which has been converted for use at the lower floor to a garage, is built into a bank, so that there is also direct access from the upper level of the garden to the west of the house into its upper floor. Its original purpose has been suggested to be a granary, although the Heritage Statement considers this unlikely. A similarity to West country 'bank barns' is noted.

The lower floor of the building is constructed of local sandstone, with some brick repairs and alterations; the upper floor is timber framed and weatherboarded, under a hipped tiled roof. The building is suggested to date from the late 18th or early 19th century and to have been built as a single phase of construction, although possibly utilising a pre-existing wall at the lower level to the east elevation. The walls and roof of the upper floor were recently partly replaced following a fire.

The building is considered to be of interest in its own right due in part to the survival of historic fabric and to the unusual form of its construction. It also contributes positively to the settings of the adjacent listed farmhouse and the nearby listed barn.

The current proposal, which follows on from pre-application advice is for conversion of the first floor to create ancillary accommodation to the main house, together with associated minor external alterations.

The current proposal is for the conversion of the upper floor of the building for use as ancillary accommodation. This would require the following works:

- Creation of a shower room at the south east corner
- Internal lining of existing structure
- Insertion of roof two conservation of Velux rooflights on NW roof slope
- Insertion of wood stove flue

- Replacement existing windows
- Enlargement of SE facing window
- Insertion of new NE window
- New stable door on SW elevation
- Extraction fan on SE elevation

To consider these works in turn:

- Creation of a shower room

Although this has an impact on the volume and floor plan of the space, it is a minor alteration, retaining the majority of the room unaltered. On balance, this aspect of the proposal is considered acceptable.

- Internal lining of the structure.

The internal character of the first floor of the building is currently of an open space surrounded by exposed timber- the framing to the walls and roof, and the boards to the floor. Although we noted on site that the building had suffered fire damage, and subsequent replacement of some of this fabric, a significant amount of the original framing survives, some of which bears original import marks indicating the Scandinavian origin of the timber. In this context, we would normally expect the framing to both walls and roof to remain exposed to view, which can be achieved by setting the insulation between or externally to the members of the frame. However, it is noted that the structure was previously lined out with lathe and plaster. Although the framing and import marks would be concealed, they would be retained behind the lining, and the work would be potentially reversible- in the context of the previous presence of lathe and plaster, it is considered on balance that this aspect of the proposal can therefore be supported. I would recommend a condition requiring that the internal finish is of lathe and plaster rather than plasterboard.

- New rooflights.

The position of these new rooflights has been amended following pre-application on Officer advice to reduce their visual prominence. As sited, the installation is within parts of the roof replaced following the fire, and as such historic fabric will not be adversely affected.

- Insertion of a wood stove flue

Again, this has been relocated to a less visually prominent position following pre-application advice. This aspect of the proposal is not considered contentious.

- Replacement of existing windows

It is proposed to replace the existing windows to the southeast and northwest elevations within the existing openings. The existing windows to the southern side are modern, and their replacement is not considered contentious. The window to the north has been re-used but is a late 19th century wrought iron casement. Although it does not appear that it has been well fitted, and is not in its original position, and contributes positively to the character of the building- it is not unusual for features such as windows within agricultural buildings to be re-purposed, in keeping with the 'make do and mend' philosophy which seems to have been common to traditional farming practice. For this reason, I would suggest that the existing window is if possible repaired and retained, rather than replaced (it could be refitted if necessary if this can be done without damage to the surrounding fabric).

- New shower room window

It was suggested at pre-application stage that this window was omitted, and I remain of the opinion that this should be done, for the reasons previously set out.

- New stable door

The existing door in this position is modern, and its replacement is not considered contentious, subject to detail.

- Extractor fan to the southeast elevation

This is a modest intervention and is not considered contentious subject to detail.

In summary the principle of the conversion is not considered contentious, and the majority of the physical works are also considered acceptable. However, aspects of the work to the fenestration require reconsideration in order to ensure that the proposal will preserve the special interest of the curtilage listed structure and the settings of the adjacent listed buildings.

Thanks,

Emily

For the applicant's information, I will be likely to suggest the following conditions to any eventual approval:

- Detailed drawings at an appropriate large scale, including sections, and annotated to show materials and finishes, of the following:
 - - New windows and doors, to include as appropriate glazing bar detail
 - Details of the service runs associated with the new shower room, to show the relationship of new work with retained historic fabric.
 - New rooflights to be flush fitting, metal framed conservation style rooflights
 - The internal finish to the lining out of the walls is to be of lathe and lime based plaster

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>

