



06/01/2025

Rachel Richardson
Planning Department
Mid Sussex District Council
Oaklands Road, Haywards Heath
West Sussex,
RH16 1SS

SPECIALIST LANDSCAPE ADVICE

Thank you for requesting advice on this application from Place Services' landscape advice service. This service provides advice to planning officers to inform Mid Sussex District Council planning decisions with regard to potential landscape impacts from development. Any additional information, queries or comments on this advice that the applicant or other interested parties may have, must be directed to the Planning Officer who will seek further advice from us where appropriate and necessary.

Application: DM/24/2874
Location: Twineham Court Farm Bob Lane Twineham Haywards Heath
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. 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.

Dear Rachel,

Thank you for consulting the Landscape Advisor to Mid Sussex District Council on the above application.

Site Context

The application Site is located to the west of Twineham Green and sits close to the south of Bolney Substation. The Site comprises the buildings and land associated with Twineham Court Farm, including the Grade II listed farmhouse. Public Right of Way (PROW) (No. 8T) runs along the access track to the east.

Planning Context

The development plan consists of the Mid Sussex District Plan (adopted 2018), the Bolney Neighbourhood Plan 2014 – 2031 (adopted 2016) and the Twineham Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2031 (Adopted 2016).

Mid Sussex District Plan (MSDP)

Policies of considered relevance include [inter alia]: Policy DP12 Protection and Enhancement of Countryside, DP26 Character and Design, Policy DP37 Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows, and Policy DP38 Biodiversity.

Twineham Neighbourhood Development Plan 2014 - 2031

Policy TNP4 Landscape and Environment within the Twineham Neighbourhood Development Plan (made 2016) 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.’*

The West Sussex Land Management Guidelines

The Site is located within Landscape Character Area (LCA) LW10 ‘Eastern Low Weald’ within The West Sussex Land Management Guidelines. Key characteristics of this LCA include the undulating landscape, arable and pastoral rural landscape, mosaic of smaller and larger fields with scattered woodlands and hedgerow trees, a quieter more secluded landscape, mix of farmsteads and hamlets, rectilinear network of narrow rural lanes, varied traditional buildings built with diverse material.

Review of Submitted Information

The application has not been supported by the submission of a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA), however we judge that the proposed development is set back from Bob Land and the adjacent PRoW 8T, and is separated by hedgerows and trees which screen the proposals. The proposed buildings are a similar height to surrounding structures and are designed to reflect the existing built structures on site and therefore an LVA is not required.

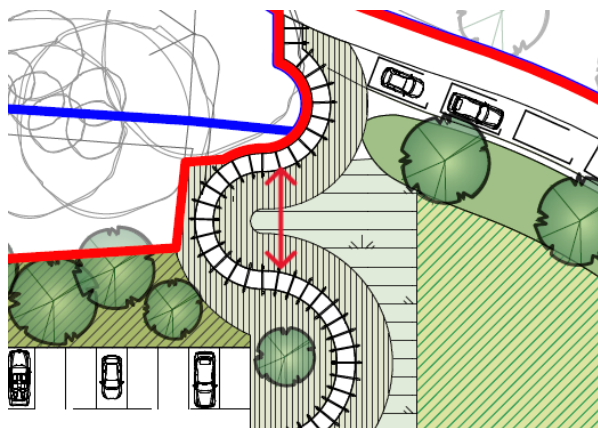
We note that that application underwent pre-application advice resulting in the revised layout as submitted under this application, however landscape advice was not sought at this stage. We do however welcome the rearrangement of the buildings and the relocated car park which is situated away from the on-site Grade II listed buildings.

We welcome that tree removals are limited. As indicated within the Tree Removals Plans, the proposed removals are largely contained to Group U trees.

Recommendations

- Clarification will be required regarding the maintenance of the retained/enhanced grassland alongside the long meadow-grass/grassland area within the southern parcel of the site. The two grassland blocks are very angular compared to the rest of the landscaping within the site, and therefore we advise that these two areas are not maintained separately once established but are integrated together as one large grassland space.
- No mix is proposed for within the two SuDS basins on the Soft Landscape Plan. Detail is required regarding the proposed planting within the basins, outside of W1 and W2.
- With the exception of the M1 space adjacent to the roadway, all other grassland spaces are inaccessible owed to being maintained long. We question whether there are opportunities to integrate some mown areas or access paths within the long grassland to allow for more public access.
- The proposed roadways are located within the Root Protection Areas (RPA) of several trees, notably T6 and T10. We advise that no-dig surface treatments are proposed where hard surfaces cross into the RPAs of these retained trees.
- We advise that any proposed boundary treatments are in-keeping with the rural character of the surrounding area. Boundaries such as post and rail would be appropriate given the surrounding context.
- There is currently no maintenance access between the proposed car park and the built complex without utilising Bob Lane to the south. Maintenance vehicle access may be obtained from the western extent of the car park however we note this is outside the red and blue boundary, and therefore an additional access may be required. Confirmation is therefore required.
- We note the quantity of ornamental planting across the site and draw attention to The West Sussex Land Management Guidelines which identifies key issues of change within LW10 including “Gradual suburbanisation of the landscape including the widespread use of exotic tree and shrub species.” We recommend increasing the use of native species across the site to better assimilate the proposals within the countryside.
- Furthermore, landscape and visual sensitivities include “High level of perceived naturalness and a rural quality in the quieter, rural landscape to the west of the A23 Trunk Road.” While the presence of surrounding energy infrastructure reduces this sensitivity, it is worth considering the site as cumulative development within the rural countryside. Management guidelines include: “Minimise the effects of adverse incremental change by seeking new development of high quality that sits well within the landscape and reflects local distinctiveness.” Of particular concern is the proposed frontage of the new access where H1 ‘Evergreen Hedge’ is proposed, which contains single species *Ilex aquifolium* and the impact this will have on the rural character of Bob Lane.

- The curved design of the covered walkway from the carpark to the venue is at risk of users cutting corners and creating 'desire lines'. This may impact the success of the implemented planting (see below).



Summary

Overall, while we do not oppose the principle of development within the site, we have recommendations to better assimilate development within the countryside.

Yours sincerely,

Megan Cowell BA (Hons) MA
Landscape Consultant

Place Services provide landscape advice on behalf of Mid Sussex District Council.

Please note: This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter.