

**From:** Emily Wade <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 28 February 2025 15:41:12 UTC+00:00  
**To:** "Rachel Richardson" <Rachel.Richardson@midsussex.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Twineham Court Farm DM/24/2839 and 2874

Hi Rachel

Comments on the above planning and listed building consent applications.

Twineham Court Farm is a Grade II listed farmhouse located in a rural position outside Twineham. The house, which has two principle ranges, dates originally from c.1600 when it appears to have been constructed as a modest two bay, two storey timber framed wing to an earlier, now removed, building. The second extant range was added across the southern end of this structure during the mid 19th century, creating an L shaped plan. At this time, the two ranges appear to have formed two separate dwellings associated with the farmstead (then known as Riddens Farm), but later, when the building became part of a wider estate associated with Twineham Court, a now demolished late 19th century house located a short distance to the north west, it was converted into a single dwelling and became the farmhouse to the renamed Twineham Court farmstead.

The house is set in fields outside Twineham; a group of former farm buildings, mostly relatively modern, is located to the east and north east of the house, although one historic building survives to the east of the house, which is regarded as curtilage listed. This dates from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and is described in the submitted heritage statement as a cart or waggon lodge with loft over. The working farmyard was located to the eastern side of the house from at least the early/mid 19<sup>th</sup> century – a historic map regression exercise contained within the heritage statement shows its evolution over that century with the addition of buildings to create a yard as the farm operations expanded around the time of the construction of Twineham Court in the later 19<sup>th</sup> century. With the establishment of Twineham Court and its landscaped grounds to the north east a sweeping driveway leading from Bob Lane past the farmstead to the house beyond was established- this survives today as the entrance to the farm. Following the demolition of the big house during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the farmstead contracted, before expanding again to the north – these mid-century farm buildings remain on the site today.

It is likely that the farmhouse would be considered to possess historical evidential and illustrative value as a good example of an early 17<sup>th</sup> century rural Sussex building, which at various points in its history functioned as a farmhouse and as farm cottages. The building has been altered and extended over the years in response to changing socio-economic conditions and changes in land ownership and farming practice. It is also likely to be considered to possess aesthetic value based in part on the use of vernacular materials seen against the landscape from which they were drawn. The curtilage listed outbuilding will possess similar values as an example of a small agricultural building of its type and period. It also has group value with the farmhouse and contributes positively to its setting.

The surviving rural setting of the farmhouse will therefore be considered to make a strong positive contribution to the special interests of the listed and curtilage buildings and the manner in which these are appreciated, in particular those parts of those interests which are drawn from historical illustrative and aesthetic values. The wider setting of the assets is impinged upon by

the Bolney substation to the west, and the Twineham substation to the north. However, the historical rural setting survives to all sides immediately around the farmstead, and in the agricultural landscape further to the east and south.

A public right of way runs south-north past the eastern side of the farmstead, leading north from Bob Lane.

Listed building consent was granted in 2023 for repairs and alterations to the listed house. Subsequent to this, planning permission and listed building consent were granted for repairs and alterations to the curtilage listed outbuilding for ancillary use, in addition to further works to the house itself and within its setting, including a below ground LPG tank, private foul water treatment plant and drainage mound. The treatment plant and mound were to be located in field to the north east of the house.

The current proposal, which follows on from pre-application advice, includes the removal of the modern disused and redundant agricultural buildings to the north east of the house, and creation of an events venue through the erection of an events barn and open barn. The farmhouse and curtilage listed outbuilding would be used to provide ancillary accommodation to serve the events venue. The works also include the erection of an estate barn to assist with the operation of the events venue and retained agricultural land- this would be located to the north east of the house- as well as a new vehicular access onto Bob Lane and provision of a driveway and parking area in the field to the south of the house, plus ancillary infrastructure including surface and foul water drainage strategy.

To consider these individual aspects of the proposal in turn:

- The removal of the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century farm buildings is not considered contentious in principle. Although these buildings have an agricultural character and do contribute to the narrative of the later development of the farmstead, they are not of any particular architectural or historical interest, and are in a poor state of repair.
- The form and layout of the proposed new buildings associated with the events venue have evolved following pre-application advice and in response to the evidence contained within the historic building assessment regarding the evolution of the farmstead. The recreation of an inward looking 'farm' courtyard to the east of the farmhouse, incorporating the retained curtilage listed building, is a positive aspect of the scheme, which in comparison with the current situation will be an enhancement of its setting.
- In terms of the scale and detailed design of the new buildings associated with this, the height and massing of the buildings are appropriately subordinate to the house and curtilage listed cart lodge, and the elevational treatment, and materials, subject to details which could be reserved by condition, are considered sympathetic to the context. This aspect of the proposal is not considered contentious.
- It is my understanding that no further physical alterations to the farmhouse itself are proposed as part of the current proposals, beyond the scheme of repair and refurbishment which has been previously approved. I would be grateful for the applicant's confirmation of this, or otherwise a summary of any works which are proposed. In respect of the curtilage listed building, works to allow its use ancillary to the house have also already been approved. The current proposal to extend off its northern end as part of the creation of the courtyard of buildings housing the events venue is not considered contentious, as again this reflects the historic form of the farm courtyard.
- The proposed new estate barn is to be located to the north of the house and reinstated 'farmyard'. As we discussed on site, although I would have no objection to the principle

for a new building in this location given the existing structures which are present to this part of the site, I do have concerns regarding the scale of the barn as shown, and in particular its height, bulk and monolithic form, which may render it unduly prominent and overbearing within the context of the farmhouse and the more considered farm courtyard development which includes the curtilage listed outbuilding. I would suggest that this aspect of the proposal is reconsidered to reduce the apparent bulk of the building, by a combination of reducing the height of the roofline wherever possible, and breaking up its monolithic form by stepping the ridgeline and reconsidering its footprint. Would an L shaped building work better in this context, perhaps?

- As we also discussed on site, I also have concerns regarding the proposed new vehicle access from Bob Lane, and the parking provision including both the new car park proposed in the field to the south of the farmhouse, and along the existing access track. As noted above, the surviving rural setting of the house makes a strong positive contribution to its special interest and how this is appreciated- the same applies to the curtilage listed outbuilding. The field in question lies in front of the house's façade, albeit at a small remove, and between it and Bob Lane. This field, together with that which is directly to the south of the house, constitute the closest and most visually prominent part the assets' surviving rural setting. It is also key to the character of the approach to the farmstead along the existing historic entrance track from Bob Lane, and to the context in which the house and outbuilding are appreciated in views from this track. Further, it provides a connection between the house and the wider rural landscape to the south of Bob Lane which would be compromised if it was developed. The semi-formal landscaping around the access drive and parking area, although intended partly to screen the parking area, would exacerbate the impact on its rural character. For these reasons, it is my opinion that the principle of a new vehicle access and parking area affecting this field will be unacceptable.

I further consider that provision of parking along the existing entrance track to the farmstead will be harmful for similar reasons of visual prominence and impact on the character of setting.

I would therefore suggest that the proposal is amended to relocate the parking as we discussed to the north of the house and farmstead, making use of this part of the area currently occupied by dilapidated mid-century farm buildings and associated hardstanding. Appropriate screening between the parking area and farmstead should be introduced.

In summary, although aspects of the proposal are considered positive, and a welcome evolution of the pre-application scheme, other aspects are unfortunately considered harmful, and require reconsideration to ensure that on balance the settings and special interests of the heritage assets within the site are preserved or enhanced, and 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.

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Submit your planning application online.

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