

CONSERVATION TEAM CONSULTATION APPLICATION RESPONSE

APPLICATION REF:	25/02814/FPH & 25/02815/LBC
CASE OFFICER:	VW
APPLICATION SITE:	Rye End Farm, Green Lane, Codicote, Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG4 8SU
DESCRIPTION OF WORKS:	Single storey front infill extension and single storey glazed extension linking main dwelling to existing entrance hall. Single storey front infill extension and single storey glazed extension linking main dwelling to existing entrance hall. Internal and external alterations.

RECOMMENDATION:

Discussions on site suggested that an alternative contemporary frameless glazed solution may be offered to the left-hand side of the vestibule lean-to. However, should the scheme be determined as is, I am inclined to raise an **OBJECTION** for the following reason:

Rye End Farmhouse is grade II listed. By reason that the proposed works to form the link to the left-hand side of the late C17 or early C18 lean-to vestibule involve the removal of a 4no. flush-panel door and brickwork and small window to the right-hand side thereof in what appears to have been added as a C17 service wing together with screening the existing ground floor window to the lounge mildly impairing the natural light and aspect out from this room, the proposal occasions harm. Although providing better circulation through the building, the level of less than substantial harm is considered low to moderate. The building already has an optimum viable use and there are no public benefits to outweigh the harm caused. The proposal fails to satisfy the provisions of Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the aims of Section 16 of the NPPF and Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031.

Note: For the FPH, Section 16(2) will need replacing with Section 66(1)

SHORT SUMMARY:

Harm, preserve or enhance.

There is a case to say that the proposal will occasion less than substantial harm to the listed building's special character.

SITE CONTEXT:

Rye End Farmhouse together with a barn and attached outbuildings at Rye End Farm form two separate grade II listings and are Designated Heritage Assets for the purpose of applying the aims of Section 16 the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The list entries can be found at the following links:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1295870?section=official-list-entry>

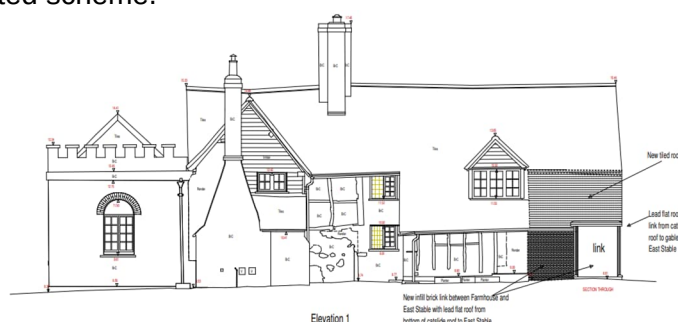
<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1102759?section=official-list-entry>

DETAILED ANALYSIS AND CONSIDERATIONS:

The key heritage issue is to consider the impact of the proposal upon the special character of this listed building.

I previously commented under refs: 20/00642/FP & 20/00643/LBC. In relation to the latter, I responded to a re-consultation on 10 March 2021 in which I stated that *"I previously commented on 26/06/2020 and 18/11/2020. Then, on 02/12/2020 I responded to plans informally received on 30/11/2020. These latest comments are in response to a 23-day re-consultation period which commenced on 17/12/2020"*. Unfortunately, my comments dated 26/06/2020, 18/11/2020 and 02/12/2020 do not appear to have been indexed in NECDM.

Back in 2020/2021 there was much discussion and several iterations as to how the link between the Farmhouse and East Stables ought to be formed. The first image below shows the consented scheme.



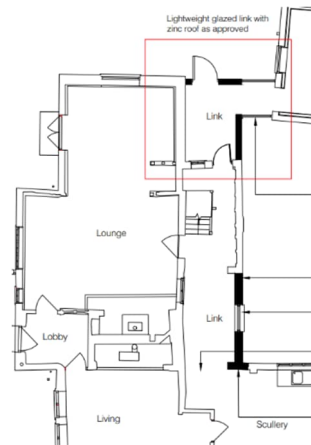
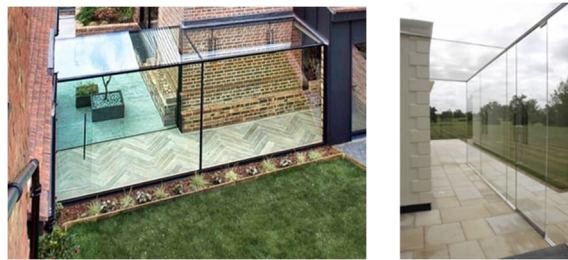
The current proposal is shown below with a link from the lean-to entrance vestibule to the entrance door in the east elevation of the C17 east cross wing.



A site visit was arranged on 10 February 2026 and attended by myself, the case officer, the applicant and her contractor.

On 12 February I issued revised site notes to the applicant which included the following:

1. SL pointed out that the link from Main Farmhouse to East Stable would be too narrow for wheelchair access. MS/VW happy to consider a wider link and this may be possible by not constructing cavity walls (as suggested by MP).
2. Possibility of simplifying the link by removing the external door to courtyard and constructing a contemporary "glass box" structure on the existing external brickwork (see image types below).
3. MS expressed concerns regarding the lean-to infill addition between catslide roof and front door. MS considers i) the proposed loss of 4no. flush-panel door and brickwork to right-hand side together with ii) the new roof 'cut-out' to still express first floor window, objectionable. MS willing to consider a second "glass box" (subject to detail) which would sit below first floor window sill level but would clearly need to be higher than existing door lintels. As stated by SL, this would allow better circulation enabling the professional need for a confidential "at home" work room for Doctors/Owners consultations avoiding the current use of the room as the only passageway to the rest of the house. Post site meeting MS concerned that if a door is required in this glazed link that this will add to the framing required which would be unfortunate.
4. SL mentioned the original Border Archaeology report which in the applicant's view supports the reconfiguration.
5. Architect with knowledge and experience of these types of structures to be appointed and amended plans will be required (SL).



Since the site meeting I have awaited a fresh proposal but have decided that I should formally register a comment. A further observation since site is that the Proposed Site Plan indicates both extensions as fully extended lean-to's effectively matching the lean-to vestibule. Whilst this has been consented to the right-hand side, this cannot be achieved to the left without screening not only the ground floor window but a first-floor window also. The Proposed Front Elevation states that there would be a zinc flat roof that would sit under the window sill at first floor.

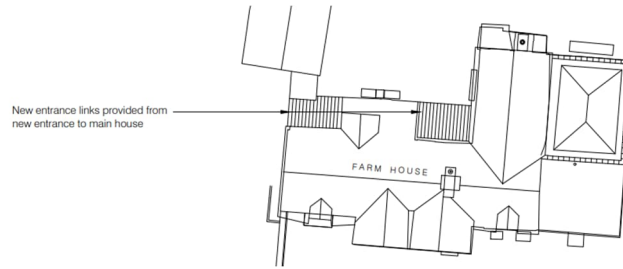


Plate 8 on page 14 of the Border Archaeology Heritage Statement shows clearly the door, window and brickwork that would be removed in the current proposal and which I am keen to see not happen.



Plate 8: View looking E showing cross wing of farmhouse with porgetting on upper storey

The plate below shows the natural light provided by the lounge window on the south side of the building.



Plate 12: View looking E showing interior of sitting room showing exposed ceiling beams and partitions and fireplace at E end of room

It is also anticipated that an amended scheme would be forthcoming to address point 1 of my site notes i.e. the applicant's desire for the link to the East Stable range to be wheelchair accessible.

HERITAGE POLICY ASSESSMENT:

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990:

Sections 16(2) – LBC only, 66(1) – FPH only and 72(1) – LBC and FPH

North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031:

Policy HE1

NPPF (December 2024):

The following paragraphs are relevant:

- **135 c)** (*sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment*),
- **207** (*local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting*)
- **210** (*desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness*),
- **212** (*great weight should be given to the asset's conservation*),
- **213** (*clear and convincing justification*), and
- **215** (*harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use*).

CONCLUSION:

Await amended scheme. Otherwise current proposal **OBJECTIONABLE**.

OFFICER: Mark Simmons

DATE: 15/04/2026