

From: Emily Wade <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 02 July 2026 16:40:10 UTC+01:00
To: "Peter Davies" <Peter.Davies@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: DM/26/1035 and 1036 Rose Cottage, High Street, Cuckfield

Hi Peter

Comments on the above planning and listed building consent applications.

Firstly, I note that the applications are not accompanied by a Heritage Statement, which is a validation requirement. An appropriately detailed Statement should be provided, which considers the impact on the settings of the affected heritage assets according to the staged approach set out in the relevant Historic England guidance GPA Note 3 '*The Setting of Heritage Assets*'.

Rose Cottage is a Grade II listed early 19th century building located in a prominent position on the junction of the High Street and London Lane in Cuckfield. It is not within the Conservation Area, but the boundary of this is a short distance to the south along the High Street, so that it would be considered to be within the Area's setting. It is also within the setting of the Grade II listed Rose and Crown PH, which dates from the late 16th-early 17th century and is located a short distance to the north, on the opposite side of the road junction. The curtilage listed former stables/coach house to the Rose and Crown are diagonally opposite the site, to the northern side of London Lane. The site is also within the setting of these curtilage listed buildings.

Rose Cottage will possess architectural value based on its design, construction and craftsmanship, historical illustrative value as a good example of a Sussex village house of its period, and aesthetic value. It also has group value with other historic buildings in the vicinity, including in particular the Rose and Crown and its outbuildings.

The Rose and Crown will possess architectural value based on its construction and craftsmanship, historical illustrative value as a good example of a rural Sussex building of its type and period, in long established use as a village public house, aesthetic value based in part on the use of vernacular materials, and communal value as a historic focus of village life. It has group value with its curtilage listed outbuilding and with Rose Cottage.

The outbuildings appear to have originally been in use as stables and/or a coach house to the Inn. They possess similar values as buildings of their type and period.

As such, the surviving semi-rural, village character of the settings of all of these buildings will be considered to contribute positively to their special interests, in particular those parts of those interests which are drawn from historical illustrative and aesthetic values. In terms of the site itself, the extensive, verdant garden of Rose Cottage, including the planting within the garden and to its boundaries, make a positive

contribution to the setting and special interest of the listed building. These features also contribute positively to the wider setting of the Rose and Crown and its outbuildings, although that contribution has recently been lessened by the removal of trees and hedging to the London Lane frontage.

The current proposal, which is retrospective, is for the retention of a close-boarded fence with concrete posts and gravel board, and entrance gates with metal gate posts which have been erected along the northern boundary of the site, adjacent to Broad Street. The proposal includes a change to the alignment of the fence and to the position of the gates adjacent to the house, to set these back from the road. The proposal includes 'native species' planting to the road side of the fence.

Planning permission and listed building consent were recently granted for a variety of works to the house and within its garden setting, comprising: *'General repairs and conservation works. External and internal alterations including replacement and alteration of modern windows and minor changes to internal layout. Installation of photovoltaic panels, construction of workshop and covered patio area. Associated landscape works.'* (DM/24/3108 and 3110). This approval included works to the boundary in question- as approved, the works were for the retention of the existing chainlink fence to the boundary, with hedging to the front, and a replacement timber five bar vehicle entrance gate. The approved plans are provided below – please note the existing plans showing the chainlink fence which was in place.



This approval was arrived at following various amendments to the scheme as originally submitted, which included revisions to the boundary treatment in this position. As originally proposed, the chainlink fence was to be replaced by close boarded fencing similar to that now erected, as illustrated in the elevations below:



This aspect of the proposal was considered unacceptable, due to the design of the fencing, which was considered because of its suburban character to detract from verdant, semi-rural character of the gardens around the Cottage, which contribute positively to its significance as a historic Sussex village building.

I have no objection in principle to the re-positioning of the fence and gates further into the site, to set these away from the roadside. However, the close boarded fencing with concrete posts and gravel boards and has a distinct urban or suburban nature which detracts from the setting of Rose Cottage and the other nearby heritage assets- this impact is worsened by the inclusion of the concrete posts and gravel boards. The fence therefore detracts from the semi-rural, village character of the settings of Rose Cottage and of the Rose and Crown and its outbuildings, resulting in harm to their special interests. I note the inclusion in the scheme of native species planting to the road side of the fence, but hedging of this type is both seasonally variable and may prove ephemeral, as the Council would have no control in the longer term over its retention. We can therefore unfortunately place only limited weight on this as a mitigatory factor.

I note also that the applicant has submitted images to show the previously existing close-boarded gates and adjacent short section of fencing, as shown on the previously existing street elevations above. In addition, the submitted Planning Statement states that *'a solid timber boundary fence has been a consistent and characteristic feature of the site for over 70 years.'* However, the applicant's own pre-existing drawings, as well as photographic evidence from Streetview show that in practice the great majority of this boundary was enclosed by chainlink fencing with varying degrees of vegetation from at least 2008 until the construction of the present fencing.

Google Streetview March 2024 showing chain link fence:



Google Street view image November 2008:



Although, as was noted in the comments to the previous applications, this fencing was not particularly attractive and was allowed to deteriorate by previous owners, it was a lightweight, visually permeable structure which did allow views into the site of the greenery beyond, and indeed vegetation grew up and through it. The boundary retained a verdant, semi-rural character as a result, and allowed views through into the gardens of the property. Both of these factors will have contributed positively to the character of the setting within which Rose Cottage and the other nearby heritage assets were appreciated.

In contrast the existing solid fence is in itself a much more visually assertive structure, being of a solid construction. It is also unsympathetic in its design and materials (specifically the concrete posts and gravel board) to the context.

I note and can sympathise with the applicant's comments regarding security. However, in design terms there would be more appropriate ways that this boundary could be

secured than by the retention of the existing situation- for example, replacement chainlink fencing as approved (this could be if desired on the revised alignment) in combination with dense planting.

In respect of the solid timber gates, whilst I consider that these are less appropriate to the context than the previously approved five bar gate, as there is clear evidence that close boarded gates were present in this approximate position prior to the current works I would not raise an objection to this specific aspect of the scheme.

In summary therefore, the proposed retention of the close boarded fencing with concrete posts and gravel board is because of its design and materials considered to harm the settings and special interests of Rose Cottage, and of the Rose and Crown and its curtilage listed outbuildings. This will be contrary to the requirements of District Plan Policy DP34. In terms of the NPPF, the proposal will result in less than substantial harm, through impact on setting, to the special interests of all of the affected assets. I would place the level of harm arising as within the low-mid range of that scale in terms of Rose Cottage, and with the lower range of that scale for the Rose and Crown and its outbuildings.

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.

Submit your planning application online.
<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk>

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