

**From:** Emily Wade <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 06 February 2026 16:01:29 UTC+00:00  
**To:** "Catherine Cardin" <Catherine.Cardin@midsussex.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Cottage Homes, Cuckfield DM/25/3209

Hi Cathy

Comments on the above planning application.

Firstly I note that Historic England have not been consulted on the application- this would be a statutory requirement due to the Grade I listing of Holy Trinity Church.

The proposed development site, Cottage Homes, is a short unlisted terrace of almshouses located to the west of the churchyard of Holy Trinity Church, within the Cuckfield Conservation Area. The site is within the setting of Holy Trinity Church, which is Grade I listed, and the churchyard which contains a number of Grade II listed tombs as well as a Grade II listed lychgate and flanking walls to the north of the site.

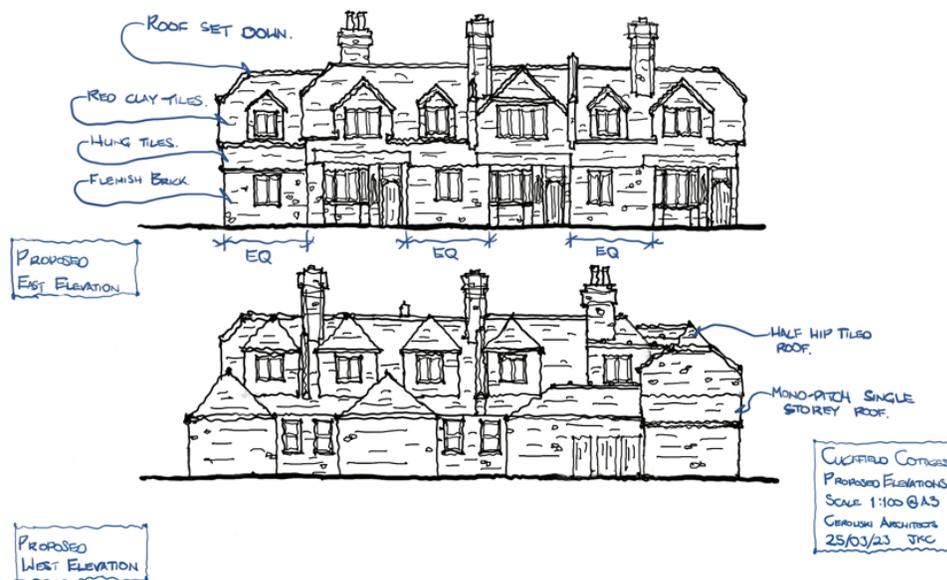
The terrace, which was constructed between 188-1882 in an Arts and Crafts style, has considerable character, particularly to the eastern elevation, and would be regarded as a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA), based on its historical and architectural interest, and its communal value within the local context. It makes a strong positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, and to the setting of the church and churchyard, which it fronts directly on to. The low boundaries around the east and south of the gardens to the terrace make it particularly prominent in views towards the church and the older part of the church yard from the south and southwest, and in views looking east and southeast from the church and its immediate setting, although the rear of the terrace is also visible in views from a number of positions in Church Platt, including attractive longer views from the west near the junction with South Street which also include the church tower, and close views looking south across the gardens of Masons Cottage/Church Bank House. The terrace was extended to the rear during the late 1950s with a series of flat roofed single floor additions, with flat roofed dormers added to the rear roof slope, which are considered to detract from its appearance. There is a detached single storey outbuilding extending along the rear of the terrace which appears to be original and also contributes positively to the Conservation Area.

The current proposal is for alterations and extensions to the terrace with the intention of rationalising the layout of the flats and providing additional units. The proposed external works comprise principally a two storey extension to the southern side of the terrace, extending back beyond the existing depth of the building along the southern elevation, an infill extension between this and the adjacent existing single storey addition, first floor level extensions above all three of the existing flat roofed rear additions to the terrace, the northernmost of which will project beyond the northern side elevation of the terrace, and replacement of the existing flat roofed dormers to the rear with flat roofed dormer

additions spanning the width of the roof between the proposed first floor level additions.

The current application follows on from four rounds of pre-application advice, dating back to 2020/2021. Following extensive discussions and significant amendments to the scheme as originally submitted, the final revision received positive feedback in 2023. Previous concerns around the scale and bulk of the proposed extensions to the terrace, and their impact on its characteristic symmetry, and the rhythm of bays and fenestration to the façade, were considered to be successfully addressed, and the proposed alterations to the rear of the building to amend the roof forms of the single storey and dormer extensions to more sympathetic hipped roofs were considered a positive benefit to be weighed against any remaining harm caused by the other works. On balance, this final pre-application proposal was considered to preserve the significance of Cottage Homes as an NDHA, the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, and the settings of the adjacent listed buildings.

Final pre-app. sketches:



It is therefore regrettable to note that the current application does not reflect the final pre-application scheme, but includes further works to the rear of the property in particular which are of concern:

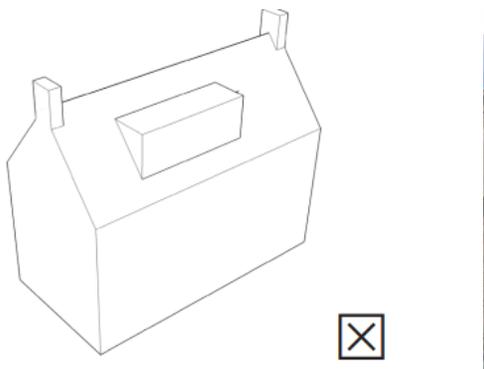
- The principle of first floor level extensions above the existing flat roofed additions was considered in the first round of pre-application discussions in 2021/2022 and found to be unacceptable in terms of the resulting relationship of scale between these additions and the host terrace. The cumulative impact of these additions with the proposed two storey extension adjacent to the southern end of the

building would be particularly unacceptable, bearing in mind the modest nature of the original cottages.

- The proposed first floor level extension above the northern flat-roofed rear addition projects beyond the northern side elevation of the building. Although this follows the footprint of the existing addition, the further bulk at high level renders this uncomfortable relationship significantly more prominent. This has the adverse effects of both further unbalancing the designed symmetry of the façade of the terrace (a factor to which considerable attention was paid at pre-application stage) and creating an awkward stepped roof form/eaves alignment to this part of the building. This side elevation is visible from a number of viewpoints within the churchyard adjacent to the church. This aspect of the proposal is also considered unacceptable.
- The proposed extension widthwise of the flat roofed dormers to the rear roofslope of the building is also considered unacceptable. The southern dormer addition also extended in depth, so that it sits at nearly the full depth of the first floor extension. The existing dormers to the rear of the building were identified at pre-application stage as being harmful to the character and appearance of the terrace. Their enlargement, even if set between the proposed first floor extensions mentioned above, is not welcome, and will remove and reverse the benefit of their reconfiguration under hipped roofs which was previously identified with respect to the final pre-app scheme.
- These dormers in combination with the proposed first floor additions would extend across the full width of the original rear roof slope of the terrace, which is an unacceptable relationship of scale and exacerbates the undue visual prominence of the additions now proposed to the buildings, when viewed cumulatively. I think that the extent and scale of the existing and proposed new additions to the rear of the terrace and their cumulative impact on the original, modest terrace of cottages is particularly clearly shown in the submitted aerial view CUCO 140, although it will also be very apparent from ground level.
- The first-floor level additions also now result in the loss of the original upstanding parapets, which divide the rear roofslope vertically, which would be a regrettable loss of historic fabric and detailing to the NDHA.
- It also appears that the set back from the façade of the terrace of the proposed two storey side addition to the south, which was never more than just adequate, has been reduced. This will have an adverse impact on the nature of the relationship of the extension with the terrace, the appropriately subordinate nature of which was subject to extensive discussion at pre-application stage.

In summary, the proposal as submitted raises a number of concerns in respect of the scale, bulk, form and design of the proposed additions to the NDHA, and the adverse impact that this will have on the character and appearance of the terrace, and its contribution to the character and appearance of the Cuckfield Conservation Area, and to the settings of the adjacent listed buildings including the Grade I listed church. This is contrary to the requirements of District Plan Policies DP34 and DP35.

The proposal is also contrary to the requirements of the Council's adopted Design Guide, in particular Design Principle DG49 (General Principles for Extensions) which requires that *'Extensions should... normally be designed to be well-integrated with the existing scale, form and massing allowing the original building to remain the dominant element of the property whether it has one or several additions. Extensions should typically use simple, uncomplicated building forms to complement and coordinate with the scale, form and massing of the original dwelling.'* DG52 (Loft Conversions and Roof Extensions) will also be relevant, and states that: *'Roof accommodation is normally reliant on dormer windows and rooflights to provide light and ventilation. However, if they are out of scale or out of character with the roofscape and proportions of a dwelling they can have an adverse impact on the character of both the dwelling and the streetscape'*. Figure 9H also applies:



**Figure 9H: Large flat roofed single dormer out of scale with the original dwelling**

Also relevant are sections 6.3.5. to 6.3.7, which refer further to dormer windows, including the following: *'Dormer windows should be visually subordinate to the roof slope, enabling a large proportion of the main roof to remain visible. Excessively wide dormers are likely to look unsatisfactory as they will often be out of proportion with the existing roof.'*

In terms of the NPPF paragraph 216, the proposal will in my opinion result in a mid-high level of harm to an asset of a mid-high level of interest in the local context.

With respect to the impact on the Conservation Area, I would place this at a mid-level of less than substantial harm, such that the balancing exercise in paragraph 215 will apply.

With respect to the harm caused, through impact on setting, to the special interest of the adjacent listed buildings, this will vary according to the nature of the asset, proximity and views but I would place it within the less than substantial scale in all cases. In terms of the church and the western lychgate, which will arguably be most affected, I would place it at around the low-mid level of that scale. The impact will be not only in terms of intervisibility and of views and vistas including both asset and application site, but of the effect on the context within which the assets are experienced in kinetic views by those moving along Church Platt and into and around the adjacent parts of the church yard,

which surrounds Cottage Homes on two sides. Again, the balancing exercise set out in paragraph 215 of the NPPF will apply.

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.

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk>

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