

From: Emily Wade <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 15 October 2025 12:39:29 UTC+01:00
To: "Stefan Galyas" <Stefan.Galyas@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: 1 Francis Road, Lindfield DM/25/2227

Hi Stefan

Comments on the above planning application. My apologies for the delay in getting these to you, which has been caused by pressure of other work.

1 Francis Road is an unlisted semi-detached house located within the Lindfield Conservation Area. The house is one half of a handed pair, dating from the late 19th century, located at the northern end of Francis Road, where it bends around to the west. This road was originally lined to its western side by similar villa pairs, and although two of the pairs appear to have been redeveloped around the mid 20th century, and some of the surviving villas have had some unsympathetic alterations, the group retain an attractive and coherent period character which contributes positively to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Each villa pair is (or was originally), as is typical of semi-detached houses of this period, symmetrical in their plan form and elevational arrangement- this symmetry also contributes to the character of the group.

The site is also within the setting of The Pavilion, a Grade II listed late 19th century Swiss and Gothic style former stained glass studio, which is situated just to the north, and the attached separately listed Grade II clair-voyee of the same date. These buildings are associated with Old Place, which is a substantial II* listed former mansion a short distance to the north. The house dates originally from the late 15th century but was substantially altered and extended in the late 19th century by renowned stained glass artist Charles Eamer Kemp. The Lindfield parish church of All Saints (listed II*) is situated a short distance to the west between Francis Road and the High Street.

The current proposal, which was not preceded by pre-application advice is for alterations and extensions to 1 Francis Road comprising the following:

- Construction of a new timber fence around the frontage of the property;
- Replacement of the existing windows to the front and side elevations to match existing;
- New conservation rooflights to the front and rear roofslopes;
- Construction of a single storey side and rear extension wrapping around the rear (north west) corner of the building;
- Removal of the existing single window at rear first floor and creation of a pair of new window openings.

To consider these works in turn:

- Although I note that there have been some objections received from neighbours to the proposed new front fence, in built heritage terms it would not be

considered contentious and could be considered an enhancement to this aspect of the property, reinstating a boundary line, and front garden area consistent with its neighbours further south along Francis Road. Further detail of the fencing would be required if an approval was granted.

- The replacement of the existing non-original windows is not considered contentious subject to detail. It would be useful to better understand the applicant's intentions in this respect as the application form mentions existing and proposed timber sash windows, however my recollection from site is that the windows are neither timber nor sashes at present. Can the applicant please review this and provide further clarification. The reinstatement of timber sash windows of an appropriate design to the house would be welcomed and would be regarded as a heritage benefit.
- The proposed rooflights to the front and rear roofslopes are not considered contentious in principle, but I would suggest that the number of rooflights to the front slope is reduced from two to one to match the existing situation at no. 2, and to ensure that the rooflights are not unduly prominent in the elevation.
- 1 Francis Road has existing extensions to the side and rear. The building originally had an L shaped footprint, which mirrored that of its attached neighbour, as is characteristic of villa pairs of this type and period. The existing kitchen extension sits behind the extent of the original rear range, and there is a lean-to porch addition to the side of the house. The current proposal is for the partial demolition of the existing rear range and construction of a full width rear extension under a flat roof, in combination with a further side extension sitting behind the existing porch lean to. The two extensions would together wrap around the rear northwest corner of the building.

It is not entirely clear from the information in front of us to what extent the existing rear range retains original fabric, but it does appear altered and has a flat roof in place of what was likely originally a pitched roof structure. It would be helpful if the submitted heritage statement could be expanded to comment on this, and also to comment specifically on the relationship with the adjacent attached rear range to no. 2, in particular to what extent the symmetry of the original pair of ranges survives.

If it is confirmed that the rear range to no. 1 has been much altered and that the symmetry with no. 2 has been largely compromised, I would not consider the principle of the proposed rear extension to be contentious. However, I would suggest that it should be reduced in width to be set off the northwest corner of the building (in combination with a reduction in depth to the proposed side extension), in order to allow the original footprint of the house at ground floor to remain intelligible.

The existing lean-to porch extension is not original, and to an extent detracts from the original symmetry of the villa pair. However, given the manner in which the further extension would be screened in views from the front of the building by the existing porch, I would not object to a further minor extension to its depth. I do however consider that the scale, in particular the depth of the side addition as now proposed is excessive, and that the manner in which it would attach to the proposed rear extension would, as noted above, result in it wrapping around and obscuring the original footprint of the house. I would therefore recommend that the depth of the side addition is reduced so that it does not extend beyond the existing original rear elevation of the building.

- The proposed works to alter the window openings at first floor from a single central opening to a pair of windows are considered contentious in principle, as the existing opening is original and is reflected by the handed opening to the rear of no. 2. This relationship contributes positively to the appreciation of the surviving original symmetry of the villa pair in views from Francis Road to the northwest, and its loss would be considered harmful to the character and appearance of the house and of the Conservation Area. I would recommend that this aspect of the proposal is omitted.

In addition to the above I note that the technical specification submitted with the application mentions uPVC pipework (rainwater goods and soil pipe). New external pipework should be of painted metal- this could be secured by condition on any eventual permission granted.

In summary, although aspects of the proposal are considered acceptable in principle, subject to detail, others require further information and/or amendment, or should be omitted from the scheme in order to ensure that the character and appearance of the house, the pair of which it is part, and the wider conservation area are preserved.

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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