

Mr Hamish Evans  
Mid Sussex District Council  
Oaklands  
Haywards Heath  
RH16 1SS

Our ref: P10000452  
Your ref: DM/26/0560

Telephone: 0207 973 3627  
Date: 8<sup>th</sup> July 2026

Dear Mr Evans,

**RE: T&CP (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 & Planning  
(Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990**

**Garage And Store Rear of Old Stone House Old Stone Link Ship Street East Grinstead  
West Sussex RH19 4EE Application No. DM/26/0560**

Thank you for your letter of 18<sup>th</sup> June 2026 regarding the above application for planning permission. On the basis of the information available to date, we offer the following advice.

**Historic England Advice**

Significance of the East Grinstead Conservation Area

The site lies immediately adjacent to the western boundary of the East Grinstead Conservation Area and is within the setting of a number of listed buildings, some highly graded.

The East Grinstead Conservation Area is one of the best surviving medieval market towns in Sussex, famous for its timber framed buildings and its ridgeline setting within the High Weald landscape.

The appearance and character of the conservation area owe much to the rich variety of traditional architectural forms, styles and visibility and attractiveness of the materials including timber framing, brick, sandstone, clay tile hanging, timber cladding, Horsham stone and slate and clay tiled roofs. These materials and details add authenticity to the Conservation Area.

The western character area of the conservation area contains mostly fine grain townscape of rows of tightly grouped buildings on prominent corners. However, there are gaps in these rows of buildings with service yards and car parks opening directly onto the street and affecting this continuity and enclosure.

The site proposed for development is one of these yards but immediately adjacent to the conservation area, rather than within it.

The proposal and its impact on the Conservation Area

The proposal is for the demolition of an existing garage and store, and the construction of a two-storey house in its place.

Your conservation officer has identified that the existing building may be of some significance with a possible functional association with Old Stone House. We agree that further understanding of this building should be undertaken before the principle of its loss is supported.

The site is adjacent to part of the conservation that has a largely a tight urban grain, strong continuity and enclosure. The redevelopment of this site therefore provides the opportunity to fill in a gap site and 'stitch' together the townscape.

However, the replacement of the store/garage with a new building of an unusual, non-traditional form, would cause harm to the significance of the conservation area by creating a strange and out of keeping feature that would draw the eye and distract on an approach to the conservation area.

We consider this harm to be less than substantial under the terms of the National Planning Framework (NPPF).

#### Historic England's position on the proposal

We have no objection in principle to the replacement of the garage/store building if it is demonstrated that this building is of relatively low historic significance. We think that its replacement provides an opportunity to develop a gap site and reinforce the continuity and enclosure of the existing townscape at this western edge of the conservation area.

However, we think the proposed form and design of the new building is not appropriate and would be out of keeping in the street scene.

As this is a prominent location on one of the approaches to East Grinstead, the proposed design would therefore cause harm to the conservation area and surrounding listed buildings, by drawing the eye and forming a distracting and odd feature.

Paragraph 208 of the NPPF explains that any harm should be avoided or minimised. We consider that this could be achieved by substantial amendments to the design.

We refer your Authority to the East Grinstead Conservation Area Appraisal Management Proposals, and in particular Recommended Action 3 which states 'MSDC will ensure that new development in the Conservation Area, and within its setting, reflects the design advice contained in Appendix 1 of this Appraisal.'

Appendix 1 highlights the importance of high quality, contextual design that respects traditional roof forms, windows and materials.

It goes on to explain that proposals for new development should carefully consider the prevailing form of existing development, taking into account scale, density, height and massing. These elements should be used to set out the basic form of the new building including roof shape, roof pitch, height, depth of plan and, most importantly, the relationship of the new building to existing surrounding buildings and to the street.

## **Recommendation**

Historic England advises that your Council should seek the following amendments to this application in order to remove the harm the proposal would do to the significance of the East Grinstead Conservation Area.

- A more contextual design is used for any replacement building along with traditional materials, roof form and windows;
- Any replacement building should be positioned to follow the existing building line to create continuity in the townscape,
- An attractive frontage should be created with the function of the building clearly identifiable through the design.

Should the proposals remain unchanged, it will be for your Council to assess whether the less than substantial harm to the East Grinstead Conservation Area's significance would be outweighed by public benefits secured by the development. In doing so, it should give great weight to the conservation of this designated heritage asset.