

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Rose Cottage, High Street, Cuckfield, West Sussex, RH17 5EN

Planning applications DM/26/1035 & DM/26/1036

Retrospective retention of a timber closeboard boundary fence and gates, London Lane boundary

Mid Sussex District Council

1 INTRODUCTION

- a. Rose Cottage is situated on the eastern side of the High Street, at the corner with London Lane, on the northern edge of the village of Cuckfield, West Sussex.
- b. The property comprises a detached Grade II listed building, dating to the 18th century, together with a modern garage, a timber-clad workshop and a wooden pergola.
- c. When purchased in September 2024, the building was in need of substantial repair following significant external and internal decay caused by a lack of maintenance and the use of inappropriate materials in previous interventions.
- d. The renovation works are ongoing, and the owners are continuing to carry out the necessary repairs to make the building suitable for use as a modern residential dwelling and to secure its long-term preservation.
- e. This Heritage Statement is submitted in support of the retrospective applications for the retention of a timber closeboard boundary fence and new timber gates along the London Lane boundary of the property.
- f. Historic mapping has been consulted to aid understanding of the development of the site, its immediate environs and its wider setting. The relevant maps are reproduced within Section 4 (Historic Context) of this report.
- g. This Heritage Statement comprises a Significance Assessment, which evaluates the relative heritage value of the identified heritage asset (namely, the listed building), and an Impact Assessment, which examines the potential effects of the proposed scheme on the significance of the heritage asset, including the contribution made by its setting. This approach is necessary to comply with the requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and the policies of the Local Planning Authority.

2 HERITAGE ASSETS AND DESIGNATIONS

Rose Cottage is a statutory listed building, first designated on 10 September 1951. The list entry reads as follows:

ROSE COTTAGE

Location: Cuckfield, West Sussex, RH17 5EN

District: Mid Sussex (District Authority)

Date Listed: 10 September 1951

List Entry Number: 1191994

Grade: II

Description: House and surgery. Exterior appearance of early C19, altered C20, but said to have a brick dated 1720. Red brick with tiled roof. L-shaped building of 2 storeys with 2 windows and a central window space. 16-pane sash windows with cambered heads and gauged brick arches. Central doorcase with flat hood on brackets, semi-circular fanlight, panelled reveals, pilasters and 6-fielded panelled door. 2 sashes to the left wing. Interior contains a plain early C19 staircase.



Figure 1 - Rose Cottage (August 2026)

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTIFICATION AREA (ANA) AND CONSERVATION AREA

Rose Cottage is not located within the boundaries of any Archaeological Notification Area (ANA) or Conservation Area (Figure 2)

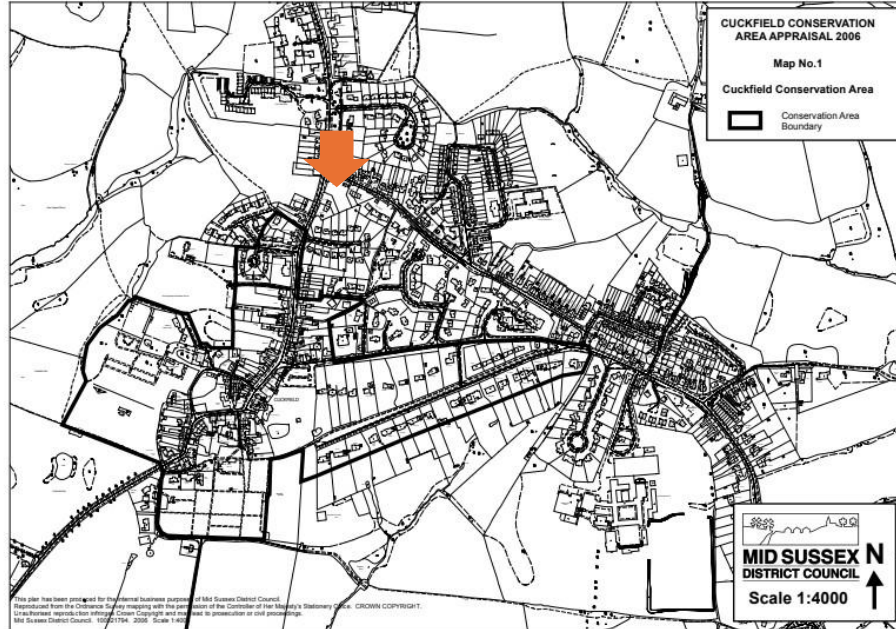


Figure 2 - Map of the Cuckfield Conservation Area showing location of Rose Cottage (orange arrow)

4 HISTORIC CONTEXT

This section appraises the historic context and architectural development of Rose Cottage and its setting, based on documentary evidence.

- 4.1 The building known as Rose Cottage appears to have been constructed during the 18th century as a single-pile structure with a rear outshot. Historic England's description refers to a brick dated 1720, although this brick has not been located.
- 4.2 That date aligns with the plan form of the original core building, which features a central passage layout with a staircase flanked by heated rooms. The presence of a large inglenook fireplace (now significantly altered in the 20th century) in the northernmost room suggests its original use as a kitchen, while the southernmost room, with a smaller fireplace, likely functioned as a parlour.
- 4.3 The origins of the building are uncertain, but it was probably constructed as a farmhouse.
- 4.4 Rose Cottage appears to have undergone significant alteration and possible gentrification in the early 19th century, as suggested by the existing staircase, which features a slim turned newel post.

- 4.5 The earliest representation of the site, dating to 1818, illustrates the building without its current rear extension. It also shows a large irregular structure to the rear, represented in grey to indicate a utilitarian or agricultural use. This structure, or group of structures, is known to have operated as a blacksmith's shop.

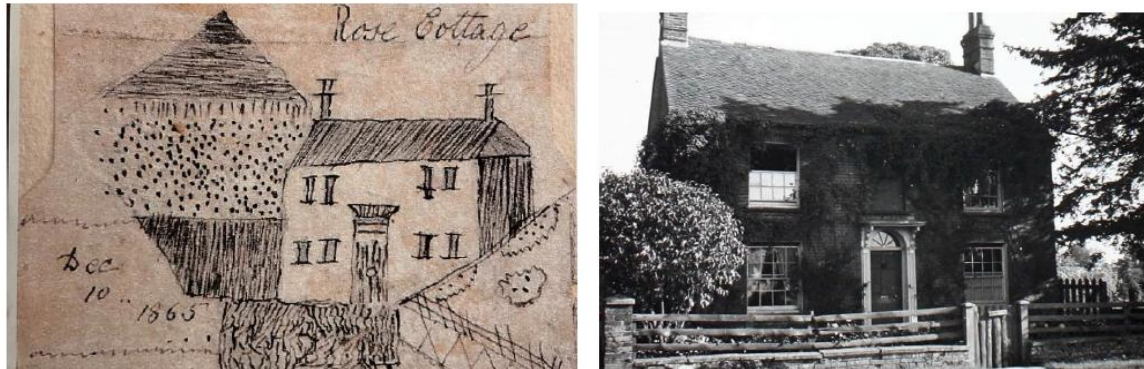


Figure 3 - Drawing of Rose Cottage dated 10th December 1865 and a photograph of the cottage in 1949

- 4.6 During the first half of the 19th century, the property was owned by Charles Juniper, who also owned the neighbouring Rose & Crown Inn and other properties in Cuckfield. The Tithe Apportionment of 1843 lists Juniper as both owner and one of the occupants of Rose Cottage, together with "another." This likely refers to Thomas Mercer, a land surveyor, who is recorded as living at Rose Cottage in the 1841 census.
- 4.7 By 1851, the property remained under Juniper's ownership but was rented to George Last, a baker employing four workers, and his wife, Matilda (Figure 3 left)
- 4.8 Charles Juniper died in 1866. His household furniture and effects were advertised for auction in The Sussex Advertiser on 7 July 1866. Following his death, Rose Cottage saw various tenants:
- In 1871, Thomas Batchelor, a retired farmer, lived there with his wife Mary and a 15-year-old servant, Kate Greengear.
 - By the late 1870s, the property was occupied by Thomas John Crowhurst, a veterinary surgeon, and his wife Elizabeth. Records from the East Sussex Record Office (now The Keep) indicate that Elizabeth Crowhurst was admitted to St Francis Hospital in Haywards Heath for puerperal mania (postpartum psychosis) but was discharged in 1878 after recovery.
 - Another resident, Mary Relf, was admitted to St Francis Hospital in 1895 with dementia and died there in 1899.
 - In 1881, George Godmark, a coal and wood merchant, lived in the property with his wife, Eliza.
 - By 1901, the property housed Lucy Gibb, her son and two daughters.

- 4.9 In the late 19th century, Rose Cottage was significantly extended with the construction of a service wing at the rear. This addition included a new kitchen and scullery, updating facilities that were likely considered outdated by then.
- 4.10 During the 1920s, the property was occupied by multiple tenants, including a Miss Harris in 1921 and a person referred to as T. H. Fox, who advertised for a general servant in *The Whitstable Times and Herne Bay Herald* on 5 May 1928.
- 4.11 In 1931, the property was vacant and advertised to let in *The Mid Sussex Times* on 26 May. By 1937, it was occupied by a Miss Bengough.
- 4.12 In 1950, the property was acquired by Dr Ian Clifford Campbell Todd (Figure 3 right), who lived there with his wife, Mary, as recorded in the 1952 Electoral Register. Dr Todd extended the building in 1951 and remodelled the late-19th-century wing to accommodate his surgery, for which planning permission was granted under reference G/51/59.
- 4.13 Rose Cottage served as the base for Cuckfield's GP practice until 1990, following Dr Todd's retirement. The surgery relocated to its current purpose-built premises on Glebe Road in 1991. Dr Todd died at Rose Cottage in 1998.
- 4.14 The existing modern garage to the rear of the building was erected in 1994 to replace a previous garage of similar size and proportion, under planning permission reference CU/010/94.



Figure 4 - Historic maps of the area showing the location of Rose Cottage in 1819 (Left, West Sussex Record Office) and in 1996 (Right, National Library of Scotland)

5 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The following is an assessment of the significance of Rose Cottage and its setting according to the range of heritage values set out in Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (English Heritage, 2008). These values are distilled under the following headings: evidential value, historical value, aesthetic value and communal value.

This assessment of significance has been used to inform the proposals, in order to minimise any impact on the special interest of the building and, where possible, to take opportunities to enhance that special interest.

Evidential value

Evidential value is described by Historic England as “physical remains” and “evidence of past human activity,” and is derived from the ability to interpret the history and historic evolution of a building through visible and tangible features.

- 5.1 Rose Cottage possesses substantial evidential value through its architectural fabric and historic features, which provide insight into its construction, adaptation and use over time. The 18th-century brick construction, single-pile layout and surviving original elements, such as the sash windows and the Regency-style central staircase, contribute to an understanding of Georgian domestic architecture in rural Sussex. The large inglenook fireplace in the northern room offers further evidence of its probable origins as a farmhouse, while the later rear extension illustrates evolving domestic needs and functions in the late 19th century.
- 5.2 The evidence provided by historic maps and archival records, including tenancy details and connections with local figures, further enriches the understanding of the cottage’s development and social history.

Historical value

Historic England considers that historical value “derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present.” This is generally regarded as either illustrative value, where the site can be perceived to represent a period in history, or associative value, where a connection with an event or person contributes to the historic significance of a site.

- 5.3 Rose Cottage has significant historical value as a tangible representation of rural Georgian architecture and its evolution over the centuries. Its early history as a probable farmhouse reflects the agricultural character of the area during the 18th century, while its 19th-century gentrification and adaptation into a more comfortable residence reflect broader societal changes, including shifts in class and domestic living standards.
- 5.4 The association with notable local figures, such as Charles Juniper, a prominent property owner and innkeeper, and Dr Ian Clifford Campbell Todd, who used part of the building as a GP surgery serving the Cuckfield community, as well as George Last, a local baker, adds further layers of historical significance. These associations highlight the building’s role as both a private dwelling and a community-oriented space.

Aesthetic value

Aesthetic value, according to Historic England, “derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.” This value may be

attributed to conscious design, whether predetermined by an architect or the work of a craftsman, and can also encompass historic and evolutionary changes to a building.

- 5.5 The front aspect (High Street) of Rose Cottage exhibits considerable aesthetic value as a well-preserved example of Georgian architecture. Its brick construction, symmetrical façade and classically inspired pediment above the front door reflect the restrained elegance characteristic of the period.
- 5.6 The building's position on the High Street, combined with its historic features, enhances the visual appeal of the surrounding area and reinforces the historic character of Cuckfield. While some later alterations, such as those carried out in the 20th century, are considered to detract from its aesthetic value, these are limited to the rear of the building, preserving the original character of the principal façade.

Communal value

Communal value “derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.” This can be divided into commemorative and symbolic value, where the place may invoke emotion or contribute to a community's sense of place, and social value, where a place can act as a catalyst for the memories associated with it.

- 5.7 In recent times Rose Cottage served as use as a private GP surgery, a role it fulfilled for 40 years. This association with local healthcare would have established emotional connections for some of the community, as it was a place of care for local residents.

Significance of the London Lane boundary

- 5.8 The boundary that is the subject of these applications lies to the London Lane frontage, adjacent to the later 19th- and 20th-century additions to the building, rather than to the principal 18th-century core or its highly significant High Street elevation. While it forms part of the setting of the listed building, its contribution to the overall significance of the asset is materially more modest than that of the principal High Street frontage. This distinction is important when assessing the degree of any impact arising from a change to the boundary treatment.

6 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

This section appraises the impact of the proposed works, namely the retrospective retention of a timber closeboard boundary fence and new timber gates along the London Lane boundary, on the significance of the listed building and the contribution made by its setting.

Historic boundary treatment and reinstatement

- 6.1 The listed building was designated in 1951. The galvanised chain-link fence shown on recent plans and imagery would have been a most improbable

boundary treatment for a listed dwelling of this character in a Sussex village at that date. Chain-link is an inexpensive, utilitarian material associated with agricultural, allotment and post-war municipal use, and was not a customary domestic boundary for a house of this age and standing. The traditional and far more probable treatment, both at the time of listing and later, was a timber fence, in keeping with the vernacular character of the village. This conclusion is supported by physical and testimonial evidence (See figure 5).



Figure 5 – Photograph of the London Lane boundary showing closeboard fencing attached to the structure of the building (source Google Street Map 2021)

- 6.2 Solid timber entrance gates existed at the property prior to the works, and it would be incongruous for such gates to have been set within a chain-link boundary; they point instead to a timber enclosure of which the gates formed a part. In addition, long-standing residents and members of the previous owners' family consistently recall a solid timber boundary that stood for many years before the chain-link fence was installed, which is understood to have followed storm damage in the late 1980s (See Figure 6).



Figure 6 - Photograph of the chain-link fence as erected by the previous owners in the late 1980s replacing the storm-damaged closeboard fence (Source Google Maps, 2021)

- 6.3 The retained timber closeboard fence therefore reinstates a form of boundary that more closely reflects the property's appearance at the time of its listing

than the later chain-link it replaced. In heritage terms, this is a neutral or beneficial change, rather than a harmful one.

Setting and the relationship with neighbouring heritage assets

- 6.4 Rose Cottage lies outside the designated Conservation Area, which does not immediately adjoin the application site. While the property contributes to the wider setting of that area, that relationship is not a close one.
- 6.5 The Rose & Crown, although historically connected to Rose Cottage (both having once been owned by Charles Juniper), is separated from it by the public highway and by an intervening 19th-century dwelling. A person standing outside the public house cannot see the London Lane boundary of Rose Cottage at all. Moreover, high, closeboarded timber fencing is already an established and prominent feature of the immediate setting of the Rose & Crown, enclosing the garden of the adjoining house (Figure 7). A timber closeboard boundary at Rose Cottage is therefore entirely consistent with the established character of the locality, rather than an alien intrusion into it.



Figure 7 – Timber closeboard fence serving as a boundary for the house adjoining the Rose & Crown Public House on London Lane (Source: photo taken by applicant in 2026)

The fence and gates

- 6.6 The proposed fence is of unstained timber closeboard construction, which will weather naturally over time and read softly against the boundary vegetation.
- 6.7 Native hedgerow planting, including hawthorn, blackthorn and dog rose, is being established along the boundary to recreate and enhance the verdant character formerly provided by vegetation growing through and around the chain-link fence. Much of the former boundary's soft appearance derived from that vegetation rather than from the fence itself. This planting represents an active investment in the long-term enhancement of the setting of the listed

building, and its establishment and replacement can, if required, be secured by planning condition.

- 6.8 The proposed gates are in keeping with those located on the property in the 1950s (See Figure 8)

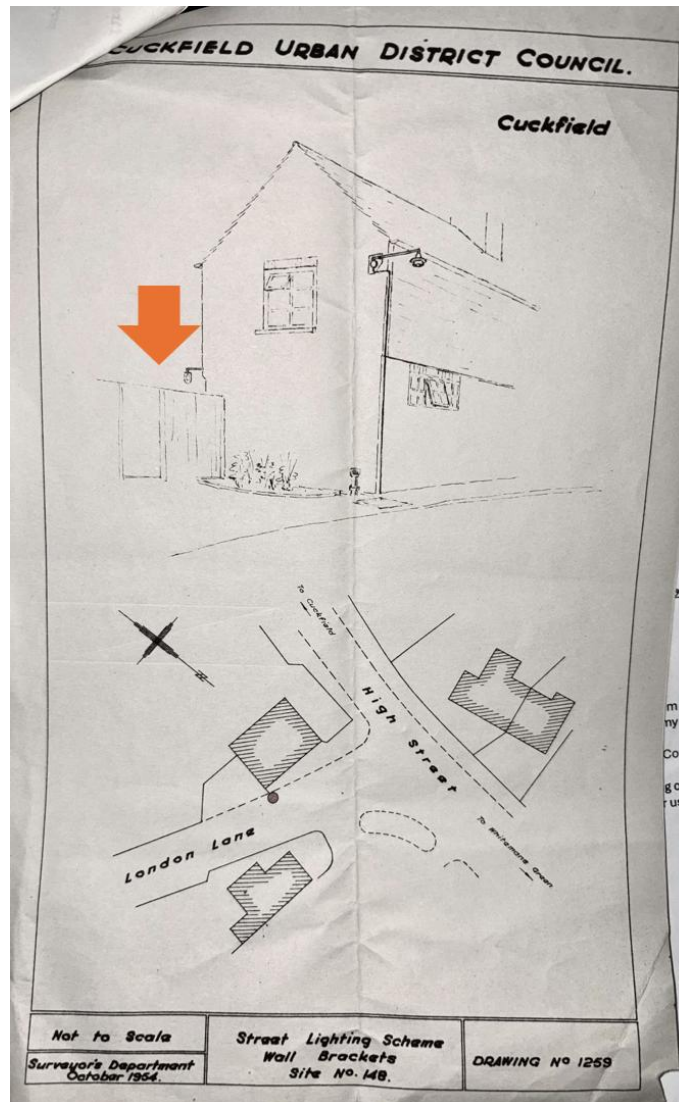


Figure 8 - Excerpt from a document dated 1954 issued by Cuckfield Urban District council in relation to the lighting scheme showing the closeboard fence and gates in situ (orange arrow).

Security

- 6.9 The London Lane boundary also meets the legitimate security needs of a highly prominent corner property with extensive public frontage. Modern crime prevention is concerned not only with preventing physical access, but with removing the opportunity for casual, opportunistic crime by reducing the visibility of attractive targets. The principle is a familiar one: motorists are routinely advised never to leave valuables on display in a parked car, whether a laptop, a bag or even a pair of sunglasses, precisely because visibility is what

creates the opportunity for theft.¹ A visually permeable boundary advertises to every passer-by the vehicles, tools and equipment on the property, and the periods when it may be unoccupied; a solid boundary removes that opportunity. This is of particular relevance while renovation works are ongoing and such items are present on site.

- 6.10 This approach is expressly supported by planning policy. Paragraph 96 of the NPPF requires that decisions achieve safe and accessible places, so that “crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life.”² It is reinforced by the police-led Secured by Design initiative and the established principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, under which the treatment of a site’s boundaries is a recognised and effective means of designing out crime.³

Privacy and outlook

- 6.11 The London Lane boundary encloses a private domestic garden serving a family home. While the setting of a listed building plainly extends beyond its walls, unrestricted public views into a private garden are not, in themselves, a heritage asset requiring preservation. The significance of Rose Cottage derives from its historic fabric, its architectural interest and its contribution to the historic streetscape, particularly as experienced from the High Street, rather than from the extent to which passers-by can see into its garden. A solid boundary is consistent with the reasonable expectations of privacy appropriate to such a dwelling.

Stewardship

- 6.12 The boundary should be seen within the wider context of the owners’ ongoing stewardship of the listed building. Since acquiring Rose Cottage, they have invested considerable time, care and resources in restoring and safeguarding it, carefully repairing and retaining many original features and undertaking works through the listed building consent process and with professional advice. The objective has not been to suburbanise a historic building, but to provide an appropriate, secure and well-maintained boundary while continuing to conserve and enhance the wider character of the site.

¹Office for National Statistics, Nature of Crime: vehicle-related theft. Personal valuables such as bags and wallets constitute the single largest category of items stolen from vehicles, and police crime-prevention guidance consistently advises motorists never to leave valuables on display in a parked vehicle.

²National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024), paragraph 96, which requires that decisions achieve places that are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion.

³Secured by Design is the official UK Police crime prevention initiative, applying the established principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), under which the treatment of a site’s boundaries is a recognised means of designing out crime.

7 LEVEL OF IMPACT

Taking these matters together, the works do not affect the historic fabric of the listed building.

To the extent that any harm to the setting of the listed building, or of neighbouring heritage assets, arises at all, it is less than substantial and at the very lowest end of that spectrum.

In accordance with paragraph 208 of the NPPF, that limited harm falls to be weighed against, and is in this case clearly and convincingly outweighed by, the heritage and public benefits of the proposal: the reinstatement of a historically appropriate timber boundary; the enhancement of the boundary through native planting; the preservation of the surviving estate fencing; improved security and privacy for a prominent corner property; improved highway safety through the repositioned gates; and the owners' wider stewardship of the listed building (Figure 9).



Figure 9 - The retained timber closeboard fence and gates on the London Lane boundary of Rose Cottage.

8 CONCLUSION

The proposed scheme is based on a thorough understanding of the listed building and its setting, its historic development and its significance, and has been informed by desk-based research and on-site inspection.

Listed buildings are not static artefacts. They are homes that continue to evolve in response to changing circumstances while retaining their special architectural and historic interest. The present proposals continue that evolution without affecting the historic fabric of the building; they concern a boundary that adjoins the later additions, rather than the principal 18th-century core or its highly significant High Street elevation, and which therefore makes a more modest contribution to the significance of the asset.

On the available evidence, the closeboard timber boundary reinstates a form of enclosure more reflective of the property's appearance at the time of its listing in 1951 than the later chain-link fence it replaced. Closeboarded timber fencing is, moreover, already characteristic of the immediate setting, including alongside the neighbouring Rose & Crown. The boundary has been enhanced by native hedgerow planting, the surviving estate fencing along the High Street has been preserved, and the repositioned timber gates improve highway safety while reducing their prominence.

The works also deliver legitimate and policy-supported benefits of security and privacy for a prominent corner property, in a manner consistent with paragraph 96 of the NPPF and established crime-prevention practice, and form part of the owners' ongoing and careful stewardship of the building.

When considered as a whole, the proposals preserve the character and special interest of the listed building and its setting. To the extent that any less than substantial harm arises, it lies at the very lowest end of the spectrum and is clearly outweighed by the public and heritage benefits of the proposal, applying the balance required by paragraph 208 of the NPPF.

9 SUMMARY

In summary, the works are considered to be proportionate and in accordance with the requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policy DP34 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.