

From: Angharad Webber <angharad@davidjenkinsdesign.co.uk>
Sent: 22 August 2025 18:14:42 UTC+01:00
To: "Katherine Williams" <Katherine.Williams@midsussex.gov.uk>; "Emily Wade" <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>
Cc: "Steve Ashdown" <Steve.Ashdown@midsussex.gov.uk>; "planninginfo" <planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk>; "michcov@gmail.com" <michcov@gmail.com>; "drake.ben@gmail.com" <drake.ben@gmail.com>; "David Jenkins" <david@davidjenkinsdesign.co.uk>
Subject: RE: DM/25/1422 - Red House Cuckfield Road Staplefield Haywards Heath West Sussex RH17 6ET
Attachments: 775_01C Proposed Site Location Block Plans.pdf, 775_06C Proposed Site Plan.pdf, 775_08C Proposed First Second Floors.pdf, 775_09C Proposed House Elevations.pdf, 775_10C Proposed House Elevations.pdf, 775_11C Proposed Garage.pdf, 775_07C Proposed Ground Floor.pdf, 775_12A Existing Site Plan.pdf, 775_13 Site Photos.pdf, Crest Planum Red Integrated Solar System Data Card.pdf, Proposed West Elevation CD_069_89-min.jpg

Dear Katherine and Emily

Thank you for your comments on the submitted proposal. We discussed your queries with Ben and Michelle and have made some alterations to the proposed scheme for both the House and Garage extensions, which hopefully address your concerns; please see drawings attached. I attach for your information the 'as existing' site plan as requested showing current vegetation / retaining walls / steps on the site, brochure of PV tiles proposed on the garage and some photos taken this week of the property when viewed from Cuckfield Road and Rose Cottage Lane.

We have established Red House is not a listed property nor has particular architectural quality and needs repair and 'upgrading', so the site can function and provide amenities as suitably expected in the 21st century for a family home on a site of this scale. Unlike many local properties, Red House has not had previous extensions carried out therefore maintains its original form and appearance. In carrying out this project, the applicant is keen to protect the integrity of the house's appearance and character therefore the proposed extensions to the house and garage are designed to appear subservient to the existing structures. Below we outline the various amendments to the proposal as shown in the attached drawings.

Extensions - DPB3 of the Mid Sussex Local Plan requires developments in/near a conservation area to preserve and enhance the existing building's character and appearance. This is achieved through the proposed extensions having charred timber cladding on new external walls to allow the existing garage and (particularly the existing house) to still appear the dominant feature on the site when viewed from the road. We believe proposing extensions of a contemporary style rather than proposing extensions of traditional appearance with the same external materials as the house, would remove the risk of producing a pastiche extension which mimicked the house, rather than enhance its original form. These latest drawings show a reduced first floor extension from the original submission to reflect more the proposal which was granted permission under application CD_069_89. However as the Mid Sussex Design Guide requires the original building to remain the dominant element of the property, we have ensured to keep ridge heights over new sections of roof, to be lower than existing roof heights on the house and garage.

In regards to the proposed ground floor extension and 'wrap around' element, the overall mass for the house and garage extensions have been significantly reduced since the initial proposal presented at pre-application stage. The building amenities, space for potential inter-generational living / accessibility, plant and building services equipment needed to install renewable energy technologies, require the site to have internal space to facilitate these needs and ensure the overall property is future-proof. The applicant has respectfully accepted to reduce the scale of proposed extensions as requested by the planning department (highlighted in red and blue of latest drawings), therefore have been left with no better alternative than to have a larger proportion of extension at Ground Floor rather than at First Floor.

DG49 in the Mid Sussex Design Guide states a wrap-around extension to an existing dwelling may undermine the integrity of the existing building. The diagram in question within the Design Guide, demonstrates a wrap-around extension which is directly attached to the existing dwelling. Our proposed wrap-around element for Red House is set back more than 8.8m from the original dwelling's South West elevation facing Cuckfield Road and would only wrap around the proposed two-storey extension of similar contemporary style and character. As the land due East between Red House and Rose Cottage Lane has a natural rise, the single-storey extension would not be visible from any public roads or neighbouring properties along Rose Cottage Lane. This, along with retaining the existing front porch facing the road, will protect the integrity of Red House's original 'front' (SW) and SE elevations.

At second floor the dormer window has been reduced in scale to reflect more of a 'portrait' proportioned window. However it must be noted current building regulations require minimum level of insulation to be installed within new elements of building fabric to buildings which are **not** listed nor in a conservation area. Therefore the amended proposed dormer is the smallest it could be proposed, without compromising thermal performance of the building fabric, which would not be acceptable from Building Control's perspective. The proposed cabrio rooflight has been replaced with a smaller rooflight, therefore not allow overlooking to neighbouring properties.

Glazing Fenestration & Rooflights – The Mid Sussex Design Guide requires extensions to respond to existing patterns of windows and door openings. Red House has traditional sash windows of a portrait proportion with low-level cills and has ground and first floor windows aligned on the original front and rear elevations. The amended scheme adopts a contemporary interpretation of the fenestration with portrait-style casement windows with no glazing bars, to maintain a simple but elegant appearance. Building Regulations require first floor windows to have a minimum cill height of 800mm above finished floor level without the need for protective guarding, therefore we have proposed low-cill portrait windows at ground and first floor throughout the contemporary extension, with consideration to building safety requirements. The previously proposed bay window and sliding doors at first floor have been removed.

Landscape – DPB3 requires gardens, trees, landscaping and boundary features that contribute to the special character and appearance of the area to be protected. As seen on the updated 'proposed' site plan, the overall site will still retain grass and low-level garden walls to help manage the change in levels across the site. Existing trees and hedges will be retained to provide screening to and from the site when viewed from Cuckfield Road, Rose Cottage Lane and neighbouring properties as seen in attached photos.

We believe the above amendments result in a proposal which meets the requirements of DP26, DP35 and the Design Guide. We look forward to receiving any further comments and hope the planning department will grant permission for the amended scheme.

Kind regards

Angharad Webber Architect
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From: Katherine Williams
Sent: Monday, August 18, 2025 6:40 PM
To: David Jenkins <david@davidjenkinsdesign.co.uk>
Cc: Steve Ashdown <Steve.Ashdown@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: DM/25/1422 - Red House Cuckfield Road Staplefield Haywards Heath West Sussex RH17 6ET

Dear David,

Thank you for your email.

It is appreciated that the property is located outside of the Conservation Area of Staplefield, however as raised during the pre-application meeting the property is located on a highly prominent position and contributes to the setting of two ends of the Staplefield Conservation Area, and therefore any proposal would need to address this sensitive position as required under policy DP35. This was also raised again during the site meeting for this current application.

The scheme submitted at the pre-application scheme raised a number of issues and primarily the scale and proportion of the proposal in relation to the original dwelling, which would be dominated by the proposal. It was recommended that this stage that the proposal would need to be significantly reduced to allow the original dwellinghouse to remain the dominant element of the property in size and scale. This would be a requirement irrespective of the sensitive position of the property and is a requirement under policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and the householder design principles of the Design Guide.

The previous permission on the property (CD/069/89) is noted however this extension is far smaller in scale and proportion than that is currently being proposed and does not justify the current proposal.

Emily did raise during the site visit that she had not yet had an opportunity to look at the plans in detail, however as the site visit was to re-familiarize ourselves with the site this would not have taken place before the meeting.

I appreciate that the period of time that it has taken for Emily's comments to be provided, which are attached, is frustrating for your client and for which I apologise. This delay was due specifically to enforcement matters which have required Emily's immediate attention on the past weeks. This was set out during the two site visits we had with yourselves on the morning of 8th July.

The reductions of the current proposal following the pre-application are noted, however the extensions would still dominate the property and would be out of scale with the original dwelling and is considered to be contrary to policies DP26 and DP35 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and the Design Guide, and requires further reduction and amendment.

Kind Regards

Katherine Williams BSc (Hons) MSc
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Working together for a better Mid Sussex

From: David Jenkins <david@davidjenkinsdesign.co.uk>

Sent: 07 August 2025 11:00

To: Katherine Williams <Katherine.Williams@midsussex.gov.uk>

Cc: Steve Ashdown <steve.ashdown@midsussex.gov.uk>

Subject: DM/25/1422 - Red House Cuckfield Road Staplefield Haywards Heath West Sussex RH17 6ET

Dear Katherine,

Thank you for your email and we accept an extension of time to the 22nd August 2025. We were hoping for a response a lot earlier which was indicated when we met at the site visit on Tuesday 8 July but understand Emily was a bit overwhelmed and now on leave. Our application was acknowledged on 5 June 2025 and consultation period was due to end on 4th July 2025, by which time the Parish Council confirmed they had no objections to the proposal nor have there been any objections from the general public during the course of the application.

Due to the delay in the system our clients feel strongly their disappointment needs to be noted. It was apparent Emily had not had an opportunity to review the submitted drawings before 8 July site visit and her comments have still not been received. Rather than requesting an extension of time for the application prior to 29th July 2025 we noticed the council changed the consultation period deadline to 13th August without notifying us or the applicant. The delay and lack of communication has been rather frustrating for the applicants but we hope, following detailed consideration, the proposed scheme will ultimately be able to be recommended for approval. A significant amount of time and effort has been expended to secure a good scheme for a house which hasn't had any work carried out on it for a long time.

It does appear Emily as MSDC Conservation Officer is overwhelmed by ongoing applications which may be down to lack of resourcing. In this particular project we undertook early pre-application discussions and offered alternative scheme proposals aiming to respond positively to the feedback we received. This application represents a considered scheme with a significant reduction in scale from the original proposals. This property is outside of the Conservation Area and there are no objections raised to the scheme. We noted the property had an earlier approval for a two storey rear extension by previous owners about 40 years ago was not implemented. The house is in dire need of restoration which our clients see as an integral part of the proposed scheme of improvements they would like to make to their home. They have been waiting nearly 20 years to invest in the house to make it suitable for their long

term future. This includes energy saving measures including replacing the boiler with an air source heat pump and installing solar panels on the new south facing garage extension so they are subtly integrated along with a major retrofit insulation improvements bringing a deteriorating 19th century property in line with modern standards.

Hopefully this project will be made the highest priority on Emily's return and support for the improvements and extension will be forthcoming in due course. The applicant's roof is currently leaking, the boiler is not working meaning there is no central heating and the existing single-glazed windows are rotting. The applicant is having to live in a damp property which doesn't meet their basic living needs, with added stress caused by a delay in the application; not caused by objections from the general public, but by the planning department's seeming lack of resourcing to address basic householder applications. Although the items listed above can all be fixed without the need of securing planning permission, the applicant feels it would be a waste of time and money to invest in fixing these items knowing that should this proposal be granted permission, these items would be removed and attended to as part of construction work.

On a general point given Mid-Sussex is an area with a significant number of Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Non-Designated Heritage Assets (which seem to be increasing and in turn creating more work for conservation officers!) it seems unnecessary to take up valuable time and resource on buildings outside of Conservation Areas which quite clearly have no impact on the setting of a Conservation Area. The current arrangement with more Conservation input being required means, in our experience, quite a number of applications do not get processed within the 8 week national planning target timescale with Conservation Officer's comments arriving too close to the end of the target 8 week period. This reflects badly on the authority impacting applicant's lives and wellbeing as they are try to plan for the future and invest in their properties. A much 'lighter touch' approach on buildings which are not listed and outside of the Conservation Area could reduce the load on the Conservation Officer.

Kind regards,

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