

Design & Access Statement

Retrospective Listed Building Consent & Planning Application

Grove Cottage 122 College Lane, Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex BN6 9AJ

Date: 7 March 2026

1. Introduction

This Design & Access Statement has been prepared in support of an application for **retrospective Listed Building Consent and planning permission** relating to the replacement of two ground floor windows and the regularisation of three additional windows installed prior to the current owners' occupation.

This application follows correspondence from **Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) Planning Department dated 3 March 2026**, advising that retrospective consent is required for the works. A previous application submitted in 2022 sought permission to replace all windows with slimline double-glazed units; this proposal was refused. However, MSDC have advised that the matter should be reconsidered following revisions to the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** in **September 2023**.

Paragraph 167 of the **NPPF (2023)** states:

“In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should give significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings...”

Where heritage assets are affected, local authorities must also apply the policies within **Chapter 16 - Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment**.

2. Site and Heritage Context

Grove Cottage is a **Grade II listed building**, dating from the **early 19th century**, and comprises a detached two-storey cottage set slightly back from College Lane.

The building has undergone a number of historic alterations over time, including replacement windows. The majority of windows currently present are **modern replacements**, either single-glazed reproductions or more recent double-glazed units.

A **window survey dated 29 October 2022** identified that two ground floor windows had **significant decay**, including rotten sills and frames. Previous attempts at repair using fillers, sealants and masonry paint had accelerated deterioration and made economic repair impractical.

The remaining older window units are estimated to date from approximately **70 years ago**, with only one surviving example from this period.

3. Proposed and Existing Works

This application seeks:

- **Retrospective consent** for the replacement of **two ground floor windows and sills** undertaken on **31 October 2022**, where the original units had deteriorated beyond repair. (C1 & C2 on accompanying plans)
- **Consent for three further windows** that were replaced prior to the current owners' purchase of the property. (A1, F11& F12 on accompanying plans)

The replacement windows were manufactured as **like-for-like timber sash windows**, constructed using **hardwood frames** and fitted with **slimline double glazing**.

4. Design Approach

The design approach has been to ensure that the replacement windows:

- Maintain the **original proportions and detailing** of the historic sash windows.
- Replicate the **visual appearance of traditional single glazing**.
- Preserve the **character and architectural integrity** of the listed building.

The slimline glazing units have been installed using **traditional putty bedding**, replicating the way historic glazing would have originally been installed. This method also allows the panes to reflect light in a varied and authentic manner consistent with historic glazing.

Importantly, the slimline glazing does **not create the pronounced double reflection commonly associated with modern double glazing**, ensuring the external appearance of the property remains unchanged.

No historic fabric of significance has been lost beyond the already deteriorated frames and sills.

5. Energy Efficiency and Sustainability

The property is approximately **240 years old** and, like many historic buildings, has limited insulation performance due to **solid walls without cavity insulation**.

The installation of slimline double glazing improves the building's thermal performance while preserving its historic character. Compared to single glazing, slimline units can **reduce heat loss through glass by up to 70-77%**, improving comfort and reducing energy consumption.

This approach aligns with **NPPF paragraph 167**, which supports improvements to **energy efficiency in existing buildings**, while ensuring that heritage considerations remain paramount.

6. Policy and Guidance

The proposal has been informed by the following national planning policy and heritage guidance:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023)

Paragraph 167 of the NPPF states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should give **significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings**, including domestic properties.

Where proposals affect designated heritage assets, decision-making should also follow the policies set out in **Chapter 16 - Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment**.

Paragraph 208 states that where a development proposal would lead to **less than substantial harm** to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be **weighed against the public benefits of the proposal**, including securing the asset's optimum viable use and improvements to environmental performance.

In this case, the replacement windows preserve the appearance and detailing of the original sash windows and therefore result in no harm, or at most very limited harm, to the significance of the listed building. The modest improvements to energy efficiency and the long-term maintenance of the building represent a clear public benefit.

Historic England Guidance

The proposal has also been considered in relation to **Historic England guidance**, including: **Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency: Historic England Advice Note 18 (HEAN 18)**.

This guidance recognises the need to improve the **energy performance of historic buildings** in a sensitive and proportionate way in order to reduce carbon emissions and improve building sustainability.

Advice Note 18 acknowledges that upgrading historic windows may be appropriate where it does not adversely affect the building's character or significance. The guidance supports the use of slim-profile **double glazing within traditional timber frames** where the external appearance, detailing, and proportions of historic windows are retained.

The replacement windows installed at Grove Cottage follow this approach, maintaining traditional **timber sash construction, original proportions, and putty glazing methods**, ensuring the external appearance of the building remains consistent with its historic character while improving thermal performance.

7. Impact on Heritage Significance

The replacement windows:

- Match the **existing window proportions and design**
- Preserve the **visual character of the building**
- Do not alter the **appearance of the façade**
- Replace elements that were **beyond economic repair**

As such, the works result in **no harm to the significance of the listed building**, while delivering modest sustainability improvements.

8. Conclusion

Grove Cottage is a Grade II listed building that has undergone various alterations over time, including the replacement of windows.

The works undertaken involve like-for-like replacement of deteriorated windows using traditional timber construction and slimline double glazing, ensuring the appearance and character of the building are preserved.

The proposal:

- Aligns with **Historic England guidance**
- Supports **energy efficiency improvements** in line with the **NPPF**
- Causes **no harm to the heritage significance** of the building.

The application therefore seeks **retrospective consent for the two replacement windows (C1 & C2) installed in 2022**, together with **approval for the windows replaced prior to the current owners' occupation (A1, F11 & F12)**.

