

From: Emily Wade <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 03 July 2025 15:23:23 UTC+01:00
To: "Caroline Grist" <Caroline.Grist@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: DM/25/1336 More House, Copyhold Lane, CuckfieldHi

Hi Caroline

Comments on the above planning application.

The site, More House, is an unlisted building located to the west side of the junction between Tylers Green and Copyhold Lane outside Cuckfield village. The building is one of a pair with its neighbour, The Crossways. Both date from the first half of the 20th century, and are to a design by the noted local architect Harold Turner, in the Arts and Crafts style. Turner, who was prolific locally, also designed a number of houses on Courtmead Road within the nearby Cuckfield Conservation Area, as well as Franklands Village, now also a Conservation Area. The character appraisal for the Cuckfield Conservation Area contains the following commentary on the architect and his style:

'Turner took important vernacular elements within the design and accentuated and embellished them, such as chimneys and entry porches. He was greatly influenced in his house design by the Arts and Crafts movement of the late 19th century, which focussed on the beauty of natural materials and honest craftsmanship.'

Turner used high quality materials with great attention to detail and worked with skilled craftsmen such as carpenters, stained glass makers and blacksmiths. Whilst there are characteristic elements in the design of the properties, each Turner house is unique with its own special features. The window design in a Turner property is one of his most distinctive features. The design used 1930's Crittall windows with very fine leaded panes, stained glass and metal window fastenings. The doors of a Turner House are always carefully designed using high quality wood and glass to form the key central feature of the property. Some have a cantilevered decorative overhang above the door to focus attention on the entrance and to protect the occupiers and visitors from the elements. Another distinctive feature is tall, decorative chimney stacks.'

More House can be seen as typical of Turner's work in its Arts and Crafts style, and for the inclusion of features such as a prominent central chimney above a hipped roof with catslide to the side, curved metal eaves brackets, oriel windows, including highly decorative leaded and stained glass, and a palette of materials including hung tile and brick. Its neighbour, The Crossways, is of a similar design, forming a handed pair.

Both buildings have been extended, More House by the addition of a conservatory to the rear, and The Crossways by a more substantial two storey side extension, planning permission for which was granted in 2008, and which refers stylistically to the original house.

In my opinion More House possesses architectural value based on its design, construction and craftsmanship, as well as historical illustrative value as a good example of an Arts and Crafts influenced house of the early 20th century associated with a noted local architect, and aesthetic value, based partly on the use of vernacular materials. It also has group value with its neighbour The Crossways. On this basis, I would consider there are good grounds for considering the pair

of buildings to be non-designated heritage assets (NDHAs), of a mid level of historical and architectural interest within the local context.

The current proposal, which follows on from pre-application advice and from a refused application for a similar scheme, is for a part single, part two storey extension to the rear of the building.

The proposal raises a number of concerns in terms of the impact on the significance of More House as an NDHA:

- The existing conservatory is modern and not of any particular interest- its removal is not considered contentious.
- However, the scale of the replacement additions is in my opinion excessive, and results in an inappropriate relationship of scale between the original house and the extensions to it. This is notwithstanding the amendments that have been made to the relative width of the two elements of the rear extension in comparison with the refused scheme, in that the two storey element is narrower than previously shown, and the single storey wider, and to the roof form of the two storey element, which now has lower eaves with a hipped roof which is cranked at the base, rather than a flat roof with a parapet. Notwithstanding these changes the extensions, in particular the two storey element, which remains very deep, will be unduly visually prominent, in particular in glimpsed side views of the property from Copyhold Lane. This will be contrary to the Council's adopted Design Guide states at Design Principle DG49 that: *'Extensions should... normally be designed to be well-integrated with the existing scale, form and massing allowing the original building to remain the dominant element of the property whether it has one or several additions.'*

In making these comments I remain mindful of the existing two storey side extension to The Crossways, however although substantial this addition is at least subservient in height to the host building, and of a sympathetic design. It was also granted planning permission outside the lifetime of the current District Plan, and before the adoption of the Design Guide. I do not therefore regard it as a wholly relevant precedent in terms of the current proposal.

- The form of the current proposal, in particular the narrow but deep two storey element, does not sit comfortably with the host building. The visual relationship between this element and the host building is in my opinion awkward and contrived, due to the unusual, elongated proportions of the extension, which do not relate well to the squarer form of the house.
- Whilst I understand the intention behind the revised (in comparison to the refused scheme) detailing to the two storey element, in terms of the hipped roof and use of leaded windows, is to relate the addition better to the original building, these features are not sufficient in the context of the above mentioned issues with scale and form to achieve a harmonious relationship between the two. In addition, the extensive expanses of unrelieved brickwork to both side elevations, and particularly that to the side facing the neighbouring property at The Crossways, and would detract both from the appearance of More House and the setting of its neighbour.

The application drawings also include replacement of the original Turner designed windows to the house with modern black metal framed units, which is considered highly regrettable, although the submitted DAS suggests that this work can be carried out under permitted development rights.

In summary, although the principle of a rear extension remains potentially acceptable, and the scheme has been revised since the previous refusal, the current proposal unfortunately remains unsympathetic to the host building in its scale, form and detailed design. In these respects it is contrary to both the adopted Design Guide as set out above, and District Plan Policy DP26 (Character and Design), which requires that *'All development and surrounding spaces, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings and replacement dwellings, will be well designed...'* It is also contrary to the requirements of District Plan Policy DP34 (Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets), which states that *'The Council will seek to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the character and quality of life of the District.'*

In terms of paragraph 216 of the NPPF, I would regard the proposal as resulting in a mid-high level of harm to an asset of a mid level of interest in the local context.

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.

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