

From: Emily Wade
Sent: 17 November 2025 15:25:18 UTC+00:00
To: "Alison Essex" <ae@gouldbaxter.co.uk>
Cc: "Matthew Comber" <mc@gouldbaxter.co.uk>
Subject: The Pavilion, Francis Road, Lindfield DM/25/2521

Dear Alison

I am writing to offer comments on the above application for listed building consent.

The Pavilion, as you know, is a Grade II listed former stained-glass studio dating from 1890 and located within the Lindfield Conservation Area. The Pavilion was originally associated with Old Lodge, which is located a short distance to the north- this II* listed 15th century manor house was substantially extended in the late 19th and early 20th century by Charles Eamer Kempe, a noted stained-glass artist, who also built The Pavilion. There are a number of other listed structures associated with the group, which form part of the late 19th century layout of the grounds of Old Place, including the gates and railings directly to the west of Old Place, a donkey wheel and sundial located within the grounds, and further gates and piers which are located to either end of an east-west pathway between the house and The Pavilion. The western set of these gates is the subject of the current application. These listed structures have a strong group value and derive part of their significance from their value as constituent parts of a designed landscape, intended to complement Old Place and The Pavilion.

The gates in question date from c.1880 and are of iron, in an elaborate design, and supported by carved timber gate posts which also bear a complementary iron screen. The current proposal is for works comprising the removal and disposal of the existing gate posts, removal and refurbishment of the gates and screen, construction of new brick and stone gate piers in a revised position set back from Francis Road including a new flanking pedestrian gateway and section of walling with a post/delivery box set into it, rehanging of the original gates, replacement of the screen mounted on brackets which would allow its removal, and associated hard and soft landscaping.

In my opinion, this proposal raises a number of concerns:

- Firstly, the loss of the existing, apparently original, wooden piers without compelling justification is unacceptable. No condition report by an appropriately experienced expert in historic timber has been received which would justify their loss, as opposed to their retention and (as necessary) sympathetic repair. Even supposing such a justification was forthcoming, the Council would not support the loss of the piers without like-for-like replacement.
- The wooden piers are a constituent part of the original 19th century design of the gateway, and their replacement with brick and stone piers of a different design is harmful to the special interest of the gateway and to the contribution that it makes through setting and group value to Old Place and The Pavilion and the other listed structures within the grounds.

- Whilst the sympathetic refurbishment of the gates and screen would be in principle welcomed, the proposal to reattach the screen with demountable fixings is not in my opinion acceptable. Although I note that the stated intention is that the screen would only be removed to allow access for tall vehicles, there would be nothing in practice to prevent the screen being permanently removed-the Council would not be able to control the extent or frequency of 'temporary' removals.
- Likewise in my opinion the revised position and design of the gateway to include the pedestrian gate and delivery box also detracts from its surviving original character and its significance, including its contribution to the surviving original layout of the grounds between Old Place and The Pavilion.

For these reasons, I consider that the application is contrary to the requirements of District Plan Policy DP34 (Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets). In terms of the NPPF, in my opinion the proposal results in substantial harm to the listed structure, such that paragraph 214 will apply. As the works do not result in any substantial public benefit which would outweigh the harm caused, and no clear or convincing justification for the work has been supplied, the NPPF requires that the application should be refused.

I am afraid that I am therefore unable to support the current application. Given the fundamental nature of the issues identified, I would recommend that the application is withdrawn; if not it would be my intention to write the application up with a recommendation for refusal within the current target date of 3rd December.

I also note that we have not received an application for planning permission alongside the current submission. Planning permission would be required for this work under Schedule 2 Parts 2 A.1(a)(ii) and (d), and as result of the Article 4(2) Direction which covers the Lindfield Conservation Area. Given the above, I would not currently recommend that a planning application is submitted, but were one to be received, I would also recommend refusal on the grounds set out above, and also harm to the character and appearance of the Lindfield Conservation Area, contrary to the requirements of District Plan Policy DP35 (Conservation Areas). In terms of the NPPF I would place the harm caused to the Area as less than substantial, at around the mid-point of that scale.

I am sorry not to be able to give a more positive response, but I look forward to hearing from you as to how you would like to proceed.

Kind regards,

Emily Wade

Please note that this advice is given at Officer level only and is without prejudice to the formal decision of the District Council.

Submit your planning application online.

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk>

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