

From: Emily Wade <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 10 July 2025 16:27:41 UTC+01:00
To: "Catherine Cardin" <Catherine.Cardin@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: 33 Ferndale Road BH DM/25/1429

Hi Catherine

Comments on the above planning application.

33 Ferndale Road is an unlisted detached house located to the northern side of Ferndale Road. The house, which dates from the second half of the 20th century, is within the setting of the Silverdale Road/Birchwood Grove Road Conservation Area, the boundary of which runs north-south along the north-western corner of the garden to the property, before turning west, and then again south to join and then cross Ferndale Road a short distance to the south west of the frontage to no. 33.

Although there is not an adopted character appraisal for this Conservation Area, the Council's document 'Conservation Areas in Mid Sussex' contains a brief high level analysis of its key features:

'This area was designated a Conservation Area in 1982 in recognition of its special character. The development of a station in 1889 attracted wealthy new residents to the town who built large new houses with large gardens, in contrast to the existing artisans' cottages to the north and west of the town centre which were occupied mainly by employees of the local brick manufacturing companies.

Although some infilling has taken place, the character of this area has remained largely intact. The buildings, mostly in Victorian and Edwardian styles, are generally in good repair and are set in large gardens with many mature trees. The character of the area which the Council wishes to conserve depends upon the relationship between the buildings and their settings.

The following features contribute to the character of the Conservation Area:

- the variety in styles of the substantial Victorian and Edwardian houses, set in spacious gardens;*
- the predominant use of traditional building materials e.g. brick, clay tile hanging and render...*

The existing house at 33 Ferndale Road is not of any particular architectural or historical merit, but in aspects of its design, including the gabled roof with a side cat-slide, and the material palette of brick and hung tile, with clay tiles also to the roof, it does reflect the vernacular-influenced style which is typical of many of the more historic buildings within the Conservation Area, as well as the use of traditional building materials which is highlighted above. In these respects, and also through its garden setting, it makes a modest positive contribution to the street scene of Ferndale Road, which contributes to the setting of the Conservation Area, including the approach to it along this road from the east.

The current proposal is for the demolition of the existing detached garage to the north eastern side of the house, and the construction of a two storey side extension over the existing single storey side range and incorporating a new attached brick faced garage at ground floor. The first floor addition is shown with a combination of flat zinc and pitched tiled roofs, with zinc clad

gables to the front and rear. At the rear, a further single storey extension is proposed under a mono-pitch zinc roof, which sits next to an existing rear conservatory addition.

Whilst the principle of the demolition of the existing garage and its replacement with a two storey side extension of an appropriate scale, form and detailed design might not be considered contentious, the current proposal in my opinion raises a number of concerns in terms of its impact on the street scene of Ferndale Road and the contribution which the site makes to the setting of the adjacent Conservation Area:

- The scale of the extension is in my opinion excessive, notwithstanding the existing side range and garage which are to be modified or replaced. The Council's adopted Design Guide requires at Design Principle DG49 'General Principles for Extension' that *'Extensions should also 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.'*
- The form of the extension, in particular its complex roof form which includes an extensive flat roof at high level, is not sympathetic to the host building. The juxtaposition of the high level flat roof with the side catslide is particularly jarring, perhaps especially at the rear where the catslide is truncated. Design Principle DG49 further requires that: *'Extensions should typically use simple, uncomplicated building forms to complement and coordinate with the scale, form and massing of the original dwelling.'*
- The detailed design of the extension, and in particular the use of materials, specifically the extensive use of zinc cladding to the elevations of the extension is not sympathetic to the existing house, or to the wider context. The detailed elevational treatment, including aspects of the fenestration, also does not relate well to the context.

In summary, although an extension to the side of the building may be acceptable in principle, the current proposal raises concerns in terms of its scale, form, massing, detailed design and materials. As submitted, the proposal in my opinion detracts from the host building, and from the positive contribution which it makes to the setting of the Conservation Area, in particular the approach to it along Ferndale Road, but including potential impact on views of the rear of the building from within the Area including from the garden or upper windows of 28 Silverdale Road or neighbours to the west.

This fails to meet the requirements of District Plan Policy DP34. In terms of the NPPF, I would place the harm caused at the lower end of the less than substantial scale, such that the balancing exercise set out in paragraph 215 will apply. The proposal is also contrary to the Council's adopted Design Guide, for the reasons set out above.

In my opinion, the applicant may be best advised to withdraw the current application and seek pre-application advice regarding an alternative proposal which addresses the above concerns.

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.

Submit your planning application online.
<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk>

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