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Sent: 10 February 2025 12:06:53 UTC+00:00
To: "Stefan Galyas" <Stefan.Galyas@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: Rose Cottage, High Street, Cuckfield DM/24/3108

Hi Stefan

Comments on the above planning and listed building consent applications.

The application site, Rose Cottage, is a Grade II listed 18th century cottage located within the village of Cuckfield, to the north of the village centre and just outside the Conservation Area, but within its setting. It appears to have been associated with the adjacent Rose and Crown public house (Grade II listed, dating from the late 16th or early 17th century). The submitted Heritage Statement suggests it was originally a farmhouse, as early maps show outbuildings to the rear, and to the rear of the Rose and Crown, although these latter could equally be associated with the pub or with the smithy which was present in this location. It was certainly however a rural building. The Cottage was extended to the rear during the late 19th century, and again during the mid 20th century when it was in use as a GP's surgery and house.

The current proposal includes internal and external repairs and alterations to the house. To consider these in turn:

- Externally, extensive repairs are proposed to the building including refurbishment of existing historic windows, full re-roofing with '*necessary structural repairs*', repointing and new lead flashings to chimney stacks, repointing of other brickwork, refurbishment of rainwater goods, and repairs to the front door and surrounding pilasters and porch hood. These works are not considered contentious in principle, and should ensure the continuing good repair of the building. It should be noted however that unless it is possible to be more specific regarding the potential structural repairs to the roof structure, a condition and/or informative relating to provision of further detail as to what repairs are necessary and the methods and materials proposed may be required. Extensive replacement of fabric, strengthening works etc. may require a further application for listed building consent.
- It is also proposed to replace existing more modern windows to the rear additions to the building with timber windows incorporating slim line double glazing. This is not considered contentious.
- It is proposed to open up a pair of existing blocked lightwells to the base of the southern elevation of the historic core of the building, to allow light and ventilation to the cellar. This is not considered contentious.
- It is also proposed to infill an existing open porch structure at ground floor to the existing 20th century flat roofed two storey rear addition. Although this will result in a slight increase in the apparent bulk of the extensions to the building, it will not affect the historic fabric or floor plan, and is not on balance considered to adversely affect the special interest of the listed building.
- Internally it is proposed to add secondary glazing to historic windows within the core of the building. This is not considered contentious.
- Within the cellar, it is proposed to add insulation between the joists of the overlying ceiling/ground floor floor structure. It is also proposed to lift and relay the cobble floor to

create better drainage, and to remove paint to the walls using the DOFF system, and repoint. This work is not considered contentious.

- At ground and first floor, within the historic core of the building various works of repair and refurbishment are proposed, alongside installation of log burning stoves to two fireplaces. These works are not considered contentious.
- Also within the historic cottage, a new partition is proposed at first floor within the southern bedroom, to create an ensuite bathroom. This room would appear historically to have been subdivided, although not along this line, as is evidenced by twin doorways and retained ribs of the original partition. In this context the subdivision of the room is not considered contentious.
- Insulation is proposed to be installed to the internal face of the external wall of the second bathroom which is proposed within existing bedroom 3. This wall does not retain historic features of interest and the impact on the proportions of the room will be very limited. This aspect of the proposals is therefore considered acceptable.
- Just as a point of accuracy, the existing and proposed attic level plans to the historic cottage are annotated as first floor- this should be amended.
- As submitted, the plans show raising of the collars to the roof frame to both rooms at this level. However, as we discussed on site the presence of lathe and plaster ceiling finishes to the southern room suggests that the roof structure above is original or early. I would therefore not support the loss of the original collars to this room, and would recommend that this aspect of the proposal is omitted. The deteriorated lathe and plaster ceiling should be repaired on a like for like basis, retaining the original fabric wherever possible. More detail of this work should be provided, either as part of this application or by condition. To the northern room, the original ceiling and skirting finishes had on inspection clearly been lost in favour of modern plasterboard. Removal of this plasterboard after our site visit has shown that although some of the collars to the roof structure have been replaced, the majority of the original timbers do remain. The applicant has suggested raising only the modern collars, and insulating and lining the roof space to the ridge (i.e. not replacing the previous, modern ceiling). Although I would not object to the proposal to insulate up to the ridge of the roof, given that the majority of original collars appear to survive in my opinion it will be preferable that the modern collars are also retained in their current position, as this reflects the original framing to the roof. Raising only a small number of the collars will result in my opinion in harm to the manner in which this original framing is appreciated, without any great benefit in terms of head height throughout the room. I would therefore recommend that this aspect of the proposal is amended accordingly.
- Various works are proposed internally at ground and first floor within the rear additions to the original cottage, including both the 19th and 20th century extensions. Although the late 19th century addition is of some interest, the alterations proposed here do not adversely affect its room plan or fabric. These works are therefore not considered contentious.

The proposal also includes changes to the boundary treatments around the gardens to the Cottage, which occupies a corner position at the junction of the High Street and London Lane, and the construction of a workshop and covered patio area, with associated landscaping works within the gardens themselves. To consider these works in turn:

- To the boundary onto the High Street it is proposed to replace the existing modern horizontal metal rails above the dwarf brick wall directly in front of the house with traditional vertically set railings with what appears to be a spear head. Subject to detail, this will be an enhancement of the setting of the Cottage, as the existing railing are

unattractive and detract from views of the house from the High Street. Ideally the replacement railings would be individually set, but further detail should be required by condition if permission is granted.

- Further south along this same boundary, which is currently marked by a hedgerow, its proposed to introduce close boarded fencing, with the hedgerow apparently retained behind this. In my opinion, the introduction of close boarded fencing in this position is not appropriate and will detract from the setting of the Cottage, and the positive contribution which it and its gardens currently make to the northern approach to the Conservation Area. Fencing of this type has a suburban nature which detracts from verdant, semi-rural character of the gardens around the Cottage, which contribute positively to its significance as a historic Sussex village building, and to the northern approach to the CA. This approach is generally flanked by hedgerows between the High Street/London Lane junction and the CA boundary- these make a positive contribution to the setting of the Area and to an understanding of its significance as the historic core of a rural Sussex village. I would recommend that the close-boarded fencing is omitted from the application and instead that the existing hedgerow is strengthened with further native species planting. If required, timber post and rail fencing could be installed adjacent to the hedging to further demarcate the boundary in a more appropriate style. However any new fencing should be carefully considered in order not to harm the roots of the hedgerow planting.
- In addition, any works to the High Street boundary should as we noted on site be considered in terms of their potential impact on the established Yew Tree to the south west of the Cottage- this also contributes positively to the settings of the Cottage and the Conservation Area.
- To the London Lane boundary, it is proposed to remove existing chain link fencing and timber vehicle gates, and replace these with further close boarded fencing, and five-bar style timber gates. Although the existing chain link fencing to this elevation is not attractive, it does at least allow views into the site of the attractive gardens around the Cottage. I also note that until recently the fencing was softened by the presence of trees and hedgerow planting, which have been removed. I would recommend that as for the High Street boundary the close-boarded fencing is omitted in favour of a native species hedgerow, which could be supplemented by a post and rail fence if required. The proposed replacement gates however are not considered contentious.
- The proposed workshop is a substantial building located within the north east corner of the extensive gardens, adjacent to the existing garage building. Given the extensive nature of the gardens, and the sympathetic design of the proposed new building, this aspect of the proposal is not considered contentious subject to detail.
- The proposed new covered patio is set within the gardens to the south of the house, close to the boundary with the High Street. Although another substantial structure, and in a more prominent position than the garage, the structure is open sided and of a sympathetic design. Subject to detail, and to inclusion of softening/screening planting as part of a soft landscaping plan, this aspect of the proposal is therefore also considered acceptable.
- Other works proposed within the gardens to the Cottage include addition of new solar PV panels, a EV charging point and a log store to the existing garage, removal of an existing oil tank, extension of the driveway/parking area, and installation of an underground surface water storage tank. These works are not considered contentious subject to detail.

In summary, although many of the proposed works are acceptable or even in many instances beneficial to the building, other aspects require reconsideration and/or further information.

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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