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Sent: 04 September 2026 13:11:35 UTC+01:00
To: "Andrew Horrell" <Andrew.Horrell@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: DM/26/1355 and 1356 Crosskeys, 76 High Street, LF

Hi Andrew

Comments on the above planning and listed building consent applications. My apologies for the delay in getting these to you, which has been caused by pressure of other work.

Crosskeys is a Grade II listed building located to the eastern side of Lindfield High Street within the Conservation Area. A comprehensive heritage statement has been submitted with the current pre-application enquiry which sets out the origins and development of the house, and discusses its significance:

- This statement shows that the house was first constructed during the early-mid 15th century (c.1425-1450) as a 4 bay open hall house including a central open hall of two bays, with flanking two-storey high end and service bays to either end- the high (southern) end of the building may have had a specialised function such as an office or workshop.
- During the late 16th century the house was modernised, and a multi-flue chimney was inserted into the cross passage at the northern end of the hall, which was floored over to create a first-floor level hall chamber. At this point it is possible that end-reversal (swapping of high and low end functions) may also have occurred, with accompanying potential alterations to partitions within the two end bays.
- During the early-mid 17th century the northern end of the building was rebuilt as a cross-wing, the layout of which is unclear.
- Further changes during the 17th, 18th and early 19th centuries include the subdivision of the house into two dwellings, addition of a lean-to against the northern part of the rear wall, creation of attics with partial replacement of the roof above the southern end of the building, and creation of a cellar under the northern end. Around this time the ground floor was also underbuilt in brick.
- During the later 19th century the house was further subdivided into 3 dwellings, or 2 dwellings and a commercial unit; by 1898 it was returned to two cottages and a shop unit added to the west side of the south cottage. Around this time various alterations were carried out internally, and the southern end elevation was rebuilt in brick.
- In 1939 the property was purchased as a whole, the shop removed, and the building returned to use as a single dwelling. Further alterations associated with this included the addition of a porch, alterations to openings to the front elevation at ground floor, which was possibly rebuilt in brick at this time, rebuilding of the north end elevation in brick, reconstruction of the rear lean-to over two storeys and internal alterations.

The significance of the listed building is also set out, and is considered to be derived primarily from its early origin, layout and evolution over the course of six centuries, including the legible 15th century plan form and fabric, evidence of early modernisation, survival of the early 17th century two bay cross-wing, and later alterations reflecting changes in local social and economic conditions. I see no reason to disagree with this assessment.

The current proposal, which follows on from pre-application advice, is for internal and external works to the house, including a single storey rear extension, an extension to the existing garage building, and a detached workshop/storage building, with associated hard and soft landscaping. To consider these works in turn:

Internal works:

1) At ground floor, the dining room floor level to be reduced to match the kitchen, with associated adjustments to the step and door:

From the evidence provided within the submitted Heritage Statement it seems that the fabric affected by this proposal would date from the extensive 1939 programme of alterations to the property. As such, the impact on the special interest of the building arising from this work is likely to be minimal and acceptable, subject to detail which could be reserved by condition.

2) At rear ground floor, retention of one oak post to the kitchen, and removal of another:

The post which it is proposed to remove also appears to date from the 1930s and as it was noted in the pre-application advice given that subject to an appropriate structural report confirming that it could be safely removed without structural damage to the building this aspect of the proposal would not be considered contentious. However, no structural report or information has been provided, and as such there is insufficient information in respect of this aspect of the proposal.

3) Removal of modern infill to a former door opening between kitchen and dining room and glazed panel inserted between existing timber studs:

This doorway was original to the plan form of the 17th century cross wing; the removal of the infill and installation of a glazed panel will give an enhanced appreciation of this aspect of the building's historic layout and flow, and is not considered contentious in principle subject to detail of the panel and its fixings. Care should be taken that this panel will not adversely impact surrounding fabric or evidence which the removal of the infill may reveal – were the application otherwise acceptable, this information could have been required by condition.

4) Adjacent to this to the kitchen side, modern finishes to the wall removed and lathe and plaster reinstated:

This aspect of the proposal is not considered contentious subject to detail. A condition requiring recording of any underlying fabric/constructional evidence

which is revealed by the removal of the modern finishes might be considered, were the application otherwise acceptable.

5) At first floor to the northwestern bedroom, remove a section of lathe and plaster above the existing beam to the southern side of the room, to expose the rafters and increase the sense of height:

This part of the building appears to have a complex history. At pre-application stage, it was highlighted that alterations here should be carefully considered in light of the findings of the historic building survey to avoid damage to or loss of historic fabric, or fabric which contributes positively to the narrative of the house. The submitted Heritage Statement notes that the area of fabric which it is proposed to remove is likely to be relatively modern in date, and that some targeted intervention has the potential to better reveal the earlier phases of the building's development. As such the proposal for targeted opening up of the ceiling is not considered contentious in principle. The detailed drawings including annotated existing and proposed internal elevations and sections which were suggested at pre-application stage have not been provided; however in this instance it is considered that had the application been otherwise acceptable these could have been required by condition.

6) Alterations to plan from to create new en-suite to the northeast of the building:

The plan form to this part of the 17th century cross wing at first floor dates from the 1939 campaign of alterations, or around this time, and is not considered to be of special interest. The Heritage Statement notes a beneficial aspect through reinstatement of a partition on the line of the cross wing wall plate. This aspect of the proposal is therefore not considered contentious.

7) Removal of the ceiling above the proposed master bedroom layout to the north east corner of the building, to open this space up to the rafters.

The fabric to be removed here appears to be modern, as does the overlying roof structure, which forms part of the 1930s rear addition. The principle of removing the ceiling may not therefore be considered contentious, however as the Heritage Impact Assessment notes, the rafters here were not intended to be visible, and are not of a quality that would suit this treatment. The pre-application recommendation that the skimming should be plastered, rather the rafters exposed, does not appear to have been taken on board, and as such this aspect of the proposal is considered contentious.

8) Removal of bathroom and WC in 1939 first floor extension:

This work does not affect fabric or plan form of historic interest and is not considered contentious.

9) To the east side of the chimney stack, between first and second floors, the existing ceiling to be removed to allow for opening up to the rafters, increasing visibility of elements of the crown-post to the roof structure.

It was noted at pre-application stage that it is somewhat difficult to understand the detail of this aspect of the proposals on the basis of the drawings provided, and that remains the case, as the suggested full set of drawings including existing and proposed internal elevations and sections annotated to indicate the impact on/relationship of the work with the historic fabric have not been submitted. However, the Heritage Impact Assessment comments that the fabric affected is modern and that the proposal has the potential to better reveal aspects of the building's construction which were not originally intended to be concealed. Further information would be required for a fully informed assessment, but on this basis the principle of the works may be acceptable.

10) Increase in height to two doors to first floor level:

This work appears to affect only 20th century fabric and as such is not considered contentious. _

11) At second floor (attic level), replacement of plasterboard and fibreboard to the east side of the chimney with glazed partitions, and opening up of the ceiling to the northern attic, with addition of new partitions to the eastern side of the space.

Although the submitted Heritage Impact Assessment comments positively on the potential of re-ordering of the partitioning around the chimney stack to better expose early roof structure of interest, there appears to be no information provided on the date or level of interest of the fabric to the ceiling, and no commentary within the Assessment relating to the potential impact of this aspect of the work. There is therefore insufficient information for informed comment on this aspect of the proposals. It is also noted that the detailed drawings requested at pre-application stage have not been provided with the current application.

12) Also at second floor, removal of a floor level beam within the room to the south of the chimney stack:

At pre-application stage it was noted that further information on the date and level of interest of this beam would be required for informed comment on this work. This has not been provided, and the Heritage Impact Assessment continues to state that further investigation of the origin of the beam would be required to address any potential impacts. Based on the information available, therefore, this aspect of the proposal must be regarded as potentially contentious.

13) Also at attic floor, removal of the existing ceiling lining to the bays to the south of the chimney stack, with the joists retained and exposed.

The submitted Heritage Impact Assessment highlights that there is potential for harm to arise from these works, and that there is insufficient information available at present for fully informed comment (10.3.8-10.3.10). The two attic spaces concerned raise different potential issues, and it is apparent that further investigatory work would be required to establish whether the principle of this proposal is acceptable. As it stands, based on the available information, the work

must be considered potentially contentious, due to potential adverse impact on historic fabric and on the character of the two rooms.

14) Lightening of beams.

Firstly, I would note that the extent of this work is not clear- the submitted DAS describes lightening of beams to the dining room, kitchen and rear corridor, whereas the proposed ground floor plan is annotated at no 21 (numbering located in the lounge) as '*All existing oak beams and posts to be lightened, using a chemical-free, non-abrasive treatment.*' In addition, the submitted Heritage Statement and Impact Assessment appears to refer to works throughout the building.

Paragraphs 10.4.15- 10.4.17 of the Heritage Statement and Impact Assessment highlight a number of potential issues with this aspect of the proposal, including potential loss of evidence of the evolution of the house from an open hall arrangement (loss of soot blackening to timbers), and loss of later finishes which further demonstrate the evolution of the building over time. It is also noted that more abrasive methods of cleaning would have the potential to cause damage to the timbers themselves and to important evidentiary features found on them (e.g. pressure marks, nail holes, carpenter's marks and apotropaic marks). These issues were also raised at pre-application stage and are reflected in the Council's comments at that point.

In addition to the above-mentioned lack of clarity as to the extent of works, no detail has been provided with the current application in relation to a detailed survey or analysis of finishes to the framing affected, or of the proposed method of cleaning, or of the way in which existing finishes or features of interest would be preserved. Even if confined to the rooms suggested in the DAS, the Heritage Statement suggests that there would be potential for harm to historic features and finishes- ref. plate 20, which illustrates apotropaic marks to the bressummer of the hearth within the dining room.

In my opinion, this aspect of the proposal remains contentious both in principle (due to the high level of potential for adverse impact on the historic fabric and finishes of the timber frame) and in terms of the level of information provided, which is insufficient to allow a fully informed decision.

External works:

1. Proposed rear extension:

The proposal includes a substantial single storey rear extension comprising a family room to the rear of the kitchen and an adjacent study. Although the scale of this addition has been slightly reduced since pre-application stage, and a glazed set back added to either side where the addition abuts the existing house, to give the impression of a narrow glazed link, this does not represent the significant reduction in scale of the family room addition, with the omission of the study entirely, which was advised at pre-application stage would be necessary

for this aspect of the proposal to be supported. As submitted, the extension remains significantly overscaled, such that it has an inappropriate relationship of scale with the historic core of the building, particularly when the cumulative impact with the existing two storey additions is considered.

In my opinion, therefore, this aspect of the proposal remains contentious resulting in harm to the special interest of the listed building and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

2. *Proposed rear porch addition.*

This is shown as a simple open structure with a lead roof supported on a painted timber post, sitting to the rear of the southern part of the historic core of the building. Whilst this is not work which would be considered detrimental in its own right, when viewed cumulatively with the proposed rear addition, it does result a slight increase in the bulk and prominence of the additions to the original building.

3. *Replacement windows throughout*

The proposed elevations show replacement double glazed windows throughout, with slimline double-glazed panes in Crittall style metal frames set in timber sub frames. According to the the Heritage Statement and Impact Assessment, the existing windows date from c.1939. Whilst in some instances where relatively modern windows of little special interest are present to listed buildings their replacement with double glazed units may be regarded as acceptable in principle, in this case the windows in question are leaded casements. The submitted elevations suggest these are to be replaced with windows of a similar design. However, it will not be possible to replace traditional single glazed leaded windows with double glazed windows of a similar style which are acceptable in their detail in the context of the listed building because this would necessitate applied or sandwiched leading. Therefore, although detailed drawings of the windows are not included with the application submission, this aspect of the proposal is considered likely to be contentious.

For this reason, the replacement of the windows as shown is considered likely to result in harm to the special interest of the listed building and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

4. *New rooflights to the rear roof slope and to either side of the northern pitched roof.*

The submitted plans suggest that these rooflights would sit over the rafters of the historic roof structure, to avoid cutting fabric. Whilst this approach is welcomed in principle the number and scale of the rooflights to the rear elevation is considered excessive in terms of their potential visual prominence. Were the application to have been considered otherwise acceptable I would have suggested that one of the pair of lights shown is removed and the other reduced

in size. As it stands, this aspect of the proposal is considered to result in harm to the special interest of the listed building and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

5. Plateau rooflight to existing flat roofed element of the 1930s rear addition.

This work affects only relatively modern fabric, and will have a minimal impact on the appearance of the house. As such, it is not considered contentious.

6. Recovering of the main roof, with new lead flashings to the chimney stack.

The proposal includes recovering of the roof to the house- the annotation to the elevational drawing provided suggests that this will mainly involve of the existing tiles, with new to match to make up any shortfall. This work is not contentious in principle, subject to detail which could be reserved by condition.

Works within the garden setting:

1. Extension and alterations to the existing garage building

As noted at pre-application stage, the proposed extension to the garage building, which dates from the early 20th century and is not considered to be of any particular interest, is not considered contentious in principle. However, I note that the advice given at that stage by the applicant's own heritage consultant and repeated in our own comments regarding the alignment of the addition relative to the boundary has not been taken. We also now have before us elevational drawings, which were not provided at pre-application stage. I have concerns regarding both the form of the extension, which has a double pitched roof, and the elevational treatment, which includes large windows, in particular to the eastern elevation. Neither of these features respond appropriately to the simple form or existing ancillary character of the outbuilding in question.

The proposal also includes solar PV panels to be set in trays to the southern roof slopes of the existing outbuilding and the extension to it. Whilst this position will minimise the impact on the setting of Crosskeys itself, the roof slopes in question face directly over the rear garden of 74 High Street, the neighbour to the immediate south, which is also Grade II listed, and are also likely to be visible from the rear garden of 72 High Street (Boarsland), another Grade II listed building. The rear garden to no. 74 appears to be of a very limited size, and is likely to be visually dominated by the southern side of the existing outbuilding, which extends along its entire length.

In this context, the introduction of a solar array along a substantial portion of the southern roofslope, plus further panels to the proposed extension, will have a significant impact on the character of views from the rear garden of no. 72, as well as a lesser but still appreciable impact on the views from the rear of no. 74. This will adversely impact the traditional, village character of the settings within which these buildings are currently appreciated, which will be dominated where built form is present by traditional materials. This in my opinion will be harmful to the manner in which the special interests of these buildings are appreciated, as

well as being harmful to the character and appearance of this part of the Conservation Area.

For these reasons, this aspect of the proposal is in my opinion contentious, and results in harm to both the outbuilding itself (which due to its age would be regarded as curtilage listed, albeit holding a level of interest) and through setting to the special interest of Crosskeys.

2. Proposed new garden building

This is to be sited at the far end of the rear garden, which backs onto a public right of way. The building is relatively modest in scale, and has been reduced in height since the original application submissions. It will be relatively well screened both in views from the PROW and from the rest of the garden by existing boundary treatments/planting. The design and materials are sympathetic to the context, subject to detail which could be requested by condition, and in my opinion this aspect of the proposal is not contentious in terms of impact on the setting of the listed building or the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

3. Associated hard and soft landscaping

Concerns were raised at pre-application stage relating to the extent of proposed new hard landscaping associated with the scheme, and the adverse impact that this would have on the verdant character of the back garden of the property, in conjunction with the new building works. The landscaping scheme has been revised to reduce the amount of hard landscaping, and is now not in itself considered contentious, subject to detail which could be reserved by condition.

4. Replacement timber gates to the side of the building.

This work is not considered contentious, subject to detail which could be reserved by condition.

In summary, although aspects of the proposal are considered acceptable, others as noted above are considered to result in harm to the special interest of the listed building and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. In addition, in some areas there is insufficient information provided to allow a fully informed assessment of the proposals. It should be noted that in most cases, these are issues which were highlighted at pre-application stage, but have not been addressed in these formal applications. Please note in that coming to this conclusion, I am mindful of the beneficial aspect of a small number of the proposed internal works, as highlighted above, but it is my opinion that this benefit is significantly outweighed by the harms arising elsewhere.

In my opinion, the proposals will result for the reasons set out above in harm falling within the category below that of substantial or total loss (in terms of the new NPPF). The impact on Crosskeys itself, in my opinion is likely to fall at around the mid-high range of that scale, although this can only be an approximation in the absence of full information on some of the proposed internal works. The impact, through setting, on the

adjacent listed buildings at 72-74 High Street falls within the lower range of that scale, with the impact on no. 74 being the greater of the two. The impact on the character and appearance of the Lindfield Conservation Area falls within the mid-range of that scale. Under paragraph HE6.4 of the NPPF these harms stand to be weighed against the public benefits, if any, of the proposal.

In undertaking the balancing exercise set out by paragraph HE6.4, which is a matter for the Case Officer, it should be noted that the new NPPF also requires that substantial weight should be given to an asset's conservation (HE6.1), and that any harm to a designated asset shall be of considerable importance and weight (HE6.3).

Policies HE4.1 and HE4.2 will also be relevant. HE4.1 requires that development proposals should avoid or minimise harm to the significance of heritage assets, and instead conserve this significance. HE4.2 requires that any harm to, or loss of significance of a heritage asset should have a clear and convincing justification. In my opinion the proposal currently fails to meet these tests.

With respect to the impact on Lindfield Conservation Area, paragraph HE9 also applies. This requires that development proposals within or affecting the significance of conservation areas should retain and conserve buildings and other features which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area where possible, and should consider the area's special architectural or historic interest in the design of development. In my opinion, the proposal fails to meet these tests.

The proposals are also contrary to the requirements of District Plan Policies DP34 and DP35.

If minded to refuse the applications, I would include for the listed building consent insufficient information in respect of the removal of the post within the kitchen, the lightening of the beams, and the various works to ceilings and the floor level beam at attic level.

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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