

From: Emily Wade <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 02 June 2026 16:10:43 UTC+01:00
To: "Stefan Galyas" <Stefan.Galyas@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: DM/26/0968 Vicarage Cottage, Mill Lane, Sayers Common

Hi Stefan

Comments on the above planning application.

Vicarage Cottage is an unlisted detached house located in a rural position to the north of Hurstpierpoint. It dates originally from the late 19th or early 20th century, but has been extended to the side in the mid-late 20th century.

There is a listed building adjacent to the site to the east. The Thatch is a Grade II listed 18th century cottage. There are also further listed buildings a short distance further east at Cobbs Mill (II* listed) and Cobbs Mill House (II listed), which date from the 19th century and 17th century respectively.

Firstly, I note that the current application is not accompanied by a heritage statement, which would be a validation requirement. However, based on the limited information in front of us, I would consider it likely that The Thatch will possess architectural value based on its construction and craftsmanship, historical illustrative value as a good example of a rural Sussex building of the 18th century, and aesthetic value based in part on the use of vernacular materials viewed within the landscape from which they were drawn.

As such, the surviving prevailing rural character of the setting of the cottage will make a strong positive contribution to the special interest of the listed building and the manner in which this is appreciated, in particular those parts of that interest which are drawn from historical illustrative and aesthetic values. The application site is a relatively modest building which is one of a small group of houses along this northern side of Mill Lane adjacent to the Thatch. It has a traditional character, and although relatively prominent in views of the listed building from the east due to its elevated position, makes a neutral contribution to the setting of the listed building.

Cobbs Mill will possess architectural value based on its construction and craftsmanship, evidential value in terms of what it tells us of the industrial technology of the period, historical illustrative value as a very good example of a 19th century water powered cornmill, and aesthetic value based in part again on the use of vernacular materials. Cobbs Mill House is likely to possess architectural value based on its construction and craftsmanship, historical illustrative value as a rural Sussex mill house of its period, and aesthetic value based again in part on the use of vernacular materials. The Mill and Mill House also have group value with each other.

The relationship of these buildings with the mill race and adjacent Herrings Stream is of course important to an understanding of their former function, and these are key elements of their setting. However, the surviving wider rural context also contributes positively to their special interest as buildings which were a fundamental part of the local agricultural economy. The site is within the wider setting of these buildings and affects the character of the approach to them along Mill Lane and Langton Lane. Again, it currently makes a neutral contribution in this respect.

The current proposal at Vicarage Cottage is for a loft conversion including a substantial box dormer to the south-east elevation, new rooflights to the northeast and northwest roof slopes, the introduction of glazing to the apex of the northeast facing gable, and new windows to the southeast elevation.

In my opinion, whilst the principle of a loft conversion may not be contentious, the box dormer as shown is unacceptable in terms of its scale, form and design. The dormer appears over-scaled and overbearing within the southeast roof slope, and is unsympathetic in form to the existing roof form of the house, including the existing gables to the southeast elevation, with which it is uncomfortably juxtaposed. The design of the extension, which is a largely unrelieved box clad in a mix of lead and hung tile is also unsympathetic. The visual impact of the proposal will be exacerbated by the location of the extension to the southeast side of the house, overlooking Mill Lane from an elevated position.

Because of its position on the southeast side of the building, the proposal will be relatively prominent in views of The Thatch from Mill Lane, looking from the southeast, and in kinetic views moving along Mill Lane and northwards along Langton Lane which also include the listed building. The addition would represent an incongruous and unsympathetic intrusion into the roofscape of the cottages along the northern side of Mill Lane, which would detract from the traditional, rural character of the setting of the listed building. This would be harmful to the special interest of the listed building and the manner in which this is appreciated.

For similar reasons, the proposal will be harmful to the wider setting of the listed buildings at Cobb Mill- although intervisibility is likely to be limited, the proposal will have some adverse impact on the character of the wider setting of the Mill, including the approaches to it along Langton Lane and Mill Lane.

The proposal is also contrary to the requirements of the Council's adopted Design Guide, in particular Design Principles DG52 '*Loft Conversions and Roof Extensions*' and paras. 6.3.5-6.3.8 which refer to dormer windows.

The proposed alterations to the fenestration to the house are in my opinion not particularly sympathetic, but would not be sufficiently harmful in their own right to merit an objection in heritage terms.

In summary the proposal because of the position, scale, form, and detailed design of the box dormer addition is considered to be harmful, through impact on setting, to the special interests of the adjacent listed buildings. This fails to meet the requirements of District Plan Policy DP34. In terms of the NPPF I would consider the harm caused to all of the affected assets to be less than substantial, at the lower end of the scale with respect to The Thatch, and at the very low end with respect to the listed buildings at Cobbs Mill. The balancing exercise set out in paragraph 215 will therefore apply. As set out above, the proposal is also contrary to the requirements of the Council's adopted Design Guide.

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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