



Design & Access Statement

Planning Application for New External Gas Meter Box

Loriner House, Broad Street Cuckfield

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement supports a full planning application for the relocation of an existing internal gas meter boxes, which currently serves the First & Second-floor commercial / residential premises within Loriner House, to a new external position within a weatherproof meter box.

Loriner House is a **three-storey, mixed-use building** located within the **Cuckfield Conservation Area**, Mid Sussex District. The building is not listed. The **ground and first floors** are in **use Class E** (beauty salon), while the **top floor** is in **use Class C3** (residential).

Although the works are minor in scale and nature, and would normally be permitted development under the **Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)**, the site's conservation area designation removes permitted development rights for certain external alterations, hence the need for this application.

2. Site and Context

Loriner House occupies a prominent position on Broad Street, within the historic commercial core of Cuckfield. The surrounding area contains a mix of traditional shopfronts, professional services, and residential properties, many of which contribute to the special architectural and historic interest of the conservation area.

The building's street-facing elevation incorporates traditional finishes consistent with the local vernacular. The site contains no soft landscaping or habitats of ecological value that could be affected by the proposed works.

3. Design

The proposal comprises:

- Disconnection and removal of the existing internal gas meter serving the first & second-floor commercial / residential premises;
- Installation of a standard utility-approved external gas meter boxes at ground-floor level, positioned to allow safe servicing and reading access.

Design considerations:

- The meter box will be constructed from durable, weather-resistant material;
- Finished in a neutral colour (white or cream) to complement the existing façade;
- Installed in a discreet position, avoiding disruption to architectural detailing or signage;
- Fully reversible, allowing reinstatement of the façade if removed in the future.

4. Access

The proposal will not alter pedestrian or vehicular access to the property.

The new meter box will be positioned in accordance with industry standards to ensure safe and convenient access for utility providers without impeding foot traffic along Broad Street.

5. Heritage Considerations

Under **Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990**, special attention must be given to preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

The external gas meter box is a minor, functional alteration that will have no material impact on the building's architectural integrity or the visual character of the conservation area. Its placement and finish have been selected to ensure minimal visibility from the public realm.

6. Biodiversity Considerations

The proposal involves no excavation beyond the immediate wall fixing points and no removal of vegetation or existing habitat. Under **Section 98 of the Environment Act 2021** and the **Biodiversity Gain (Exemptions, Transitional and Savings Provisions) Regulations 2024**, developments with no biodiversity impact are exempt from the requirement to deliver a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain.

7. Conclusion

The proposal represents a small-scale and carefully considered alteration that will preserve the character and appearance of the Cuckfield Conservation Area. The design, scale, and positioning of the meter box's ensure that it does not detract from the building's architectural quality or disrupt the established visual character of the surrounding streetscape.

The relocation of the gas meters to an external position will have no adverse effect on the functionality or accessibility of the mixed-use premises, ensuring continued ease of access for both the commercial and residential occupiers, as well as utility providers.

GRM/0725/C01 : Aug 2025