

From: Emily Wade <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 01 May 2026 16:06:56 UTC+01:00
To: "Caroline Grist" <Caroline.Grist@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: DM/26/0481 Natwest, 15 London Road, EG

Hi Caroline

Comments on the above planning application.

The application site is an unlisted building in a prominent location within East Grinstead town centre. It is not within the Conservation Area, but is directly adjacent to the boundary, so is within its setting. It is also within the settings of the group of listed buildings around the junction London Road, the High Street and West Street, a short distance to the south, including most prominently the Grade II listed Constitutional Buildings.

The building, which appears to date originally from the late 19th or early 20th centuries, is of three storeys and is in an Arts and Crafts style, having to the front range elevations clad with patterned hung tile under pitched tiled roofs with exposed rafter feet and eaves brackets and casement windows. The rear range is partly hung tile and partly brick, with sash windows. As constructed, the front range appears to have had an L shaped footprint, with gables facing westwards towards London Road and southwards towards the adjacent properties. A third gable was set in the angle of the two, facing south-west. This unusual form survives to the first and second floors of the front range, but has been concealed at ground floor by a mid-20th century flat-roofed extension which sits straight on to the road directly behind the pavement, and appears to be associated with the use of the building as a bank from this period. The extension is in a revivalist style which broadly complements the architecture of the original building, with brick elevations, a stepped stone-coped parapet, windows with stone (or faux stone) surrounds, and Tudor-arched carved or moulded stone doorways.

In my opinion, the existing building is of some interest and makes a positive contribution to the setting of the immediately adjacent Conservation Area and, to a perhaps lesser extent, of the slightly more distant listed buildings to the south. The quality of the architecture, materials and detailing, of both the original building and the later ground floor front extension, the manner in which these different phases reflect the architectural styles of their respective periods and express the development of the site and its function, and the unusual form of the upper floors which adds vitality and movement to the building line of this part of London Road, all create a building which is of value and interest within the street scene.

Although less exposed to public view, the rear of the site is also visible from the rear of the properties to the south along London Road, the new houses at 1A and 1B High Street, and the adjacent rear yards and walkways. This part of the building also retains character and features of interest including the patterned hung tile and a projecting

lean-to bay window with unusual vertically elongated sash windows. This also contributes positively to the setting of the Conservation Area, which includes this back-land area in the angle between London Road and the High Street.

The current proposal is for the change of use of the first and second floors of the building to an HMO with associated alterations including a two storey front extension, single storey rear extension, new rooflight, extension of an existing wall and a new flat roof to the rear. To consider these works in turn:

- The two-storey front addition would sit in the angle of the west and south facing wings, creating a second west facing gable. It would be slightly set back from the front building line of the west wing, and would be detailed to match existing. In my opinion, in removing the angled gable and reducing the set back of this part of the building, the extension would detract from the architectural interest of the building, and its contribution to the street scene. I would therefore recommend that this part of the proposal is removed from the scheme.
- The proposed extension to the rear of the building is described as single storey but in fact appears to be over two storeys, rising to first floor level, or possibly set on an existing single storey infill? This requires clarification- existing and proposed sectional drawings would be useful as the area is not shown fully on the submitted elevations. In any case, the addition does not relate well to the original building in terms of its position, scale, form or detailed design. It involves the loss of surviving original features including the above-mentioned lean-to bay window, and adjacent sash windows, and the flat roof form does not relate well to the original gabled roof of the building. I would recommend that this aspect of the proposal is revised to reduce the scale of the addition, set it away from the bay window, and introduce a more appropriate roof form, or otherwise omitted from the scheme.
- The proposed new rooflight is in the form of a lantern to an existing flat roof towards the rear of the building. The lantern is not shown on the proposed elevations – in fact this part of the building does not appear to be fully illustrated- but subject to this being addressed and to detail of the lantern I would consider this work unlikely to prove contentious.
- The proposed upwards extension and flat roof are to an existing small flat roofed element to the northern side of the building. This work will have little impact on views of the building from outside of the site and is not considered contentious.

For these reasons in my opinion the proposal will be harmful to the setting and significance of the East Grinstead Conservation Area, and the setting of the Constitutional Buildings, its special interest and the manner in which this is appreciated. This will be contrary to the requirements of District Plan Policies DP34 and DP35. In terms of the NPPF, the proposal will result in less than substantial harm, through impact on setting, to the significance of the Conservation Area at around the low-mid point of that scale, such that the balancing exercise set out in paragraph 215 will apply. In respect of the listed building, the harm arising will also be less than substantial, at the lower end the scale.

I would suggest that the applicant may be best advised to withdraw the current application and approach the Council for pre-application advice prior to submission of any revised scheme.

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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