

From: Emily Wade <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 06 May 2026 15:58:42 UTC+01:00
To: "Caroline Grist" <Caroline.Grist@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: DM/26/0734 Mulberries, Lewes Road, Horsted Keynes

Hi Caroline

Comments on the above planning application.

The site, Mulberries, is an unlisted detached house located within the Horsted Keynes Conservation Area. Adjacent to the site to the north east is Rixons, a Grade II listed timber framed house dating from the 17th century. Mulberries, which from historic map regression dates from the mid 20th century, is in a loosely vernacular style, with brick and hung tile elevations, and a tiled roof with a catslide to the eastern end, and a recessed porch with tiled hood. The building has been extended and altered, including by the addition of a flat roofed garage to the east.

The current proposal is for an extension to the eastern side of the building over its full height, effectively partially moving the catslide roof over to sit above and incorporate the garage. The proposal includes a flat roofed box dormer to the extended eastern roof slope.

We have previously commented on pre-application proposals at this property for alternative schemes to extend to this side of the house, comprising in both cases a hip to gable extension, with in one instance the addition of a lean-to roof above the garage. Neither of these proposals received a favourable response, due to concerns relating to the loss of the characteristic catslide roof and the increased bulk and visual prominence of the building within the setting of Rixons, including in views from the direction of the village green, which would decrease the sense of separation between the listed building and the more modern development along Lewes Road.

The current proposal differs from these pre-application schemes in terms of the form of the extension and roof and first floor level, in that the catslide is replicated. This does address the concern regarding the loss of this feature, and would also to an extent reduce the apparent bulk and visual prominence of the addition in views from the east. However, I continue to have concerns about the proposal for the following reasons:

- The extension, which is to the full height of the existing roof ridge, is also aligned with the façade to the building without any set back. It therefore fails to be appropriately subservient to the existing building, or to allow the original form of the house to continue to be read.
- Due to its scale and form it unbalances the elevation of the building, which at present, notwithstanding the catslide, is a balanced composition.
- The existing flat roofed garage is not a positive feature of the property and detracts from the character and appearance of the house and of the Conservation Area. However, incorporating the garage into the extended house

creates an integral garage, a suburban feature which further detracts from the vernacular character of the building and its contribution to the Area.

- The box dormer to the eastern roof slope is over-scaled and unsympathetic in its design. It interrupts and detracts from the characteristic sweep of the catslide, and adds to the apparent bulk of the extension including in views from the east.
- The treatment of the rear of the extension creates an awkward juxtaposition of roof forms, and an unattractive blank rear elevation at both ground and first floors.
- Notwithstanding the retention of the catslide, the proposed extension will result in an increase in the bulk and proximity of Mulberries relative to the listed building at Dixons, including in important views from the direction of The Green. This impact will be exacerbated by the east facing box dormer.

In summary, notwithstanding the further revisions made since pre-application stage, the proposal remains contentious in terms of its scale, form and design, and will adversely impact both the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the setting of Dixons. This will be contrary to the requirements of District Plan Policies DP34 and DP35. The proposal will result in less than substantial harm to both of the affected assets, at around the low-mid range of that scale in respect of the Conservation Area, and within the lower range in respect of Dixons. In both cases the balancing exercise set out in paragraph 215 will apply.

As noted above the proposal is also contrary to the requirements of the Council's adopted Design Guide, specifically Design Principle DG49 'General Principles for Extensions' which requires that *'Extensions should also normally be designed to be well-integrated with the existing scale, form and massing allowing the original building to remain the dominant element of the property whether it has one or several additions'*. DG50 'Front and Side Extensions' which states that *'Side extensions should normally be subservient to the original dwelling and typically be set-back from the front of the house to help define the original building'*, and DG52 'Loft Conversions and Roof Extensions' which states that *'Roof extensions and dormer windows that alter the existing ridge of the roof or significantly alter the roof profile of a building will not normally be acceptable, particularly on the front roof slope.'* Figure 9H and sections 6.3.5-6.3.8 will also apply in relation to the proposed box dormer.

The application documents reference an approval from 1987 for a similar scheme which was not constructed. However, this is far outside the current policy context, and predates the NPPF, the current District Plan, and the Councils adopted Design Guide. As this approval was given in a materially different policy context, I do not feel that it holds any significant weight in the consideration of the current proposal.

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.

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<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk>

Emily Wade Ma MSc
Conservation Officer
Planning Services
Tel: +44 (0)1444 477385
emily.wade@midsussex.gov.uk <http://www.midsussex.gov.uk>



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