

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/25/2048	Case Officer:	Stefan Galyas
Application Type:	Full Application		
Proposal:	Provision of external gas box meter.		
Site:	Loriner House, Broad Street, Cuckfield, West Sussex, RH17 5LJ, , ,		
Validation Date	19 Aug 2025	Overall Expiry Date:	29 Sep 2025
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	8 Oct 2025
Target Date:	14 Oct 2025	Recommending Officer Signature:	<i>Stefan Galyas</i>

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	0
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Signed and Agreed By:	<i>Stephen Ashdown</i>	Date:	9 Oct 2025
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/25/2048

**Loriner House, Broad Street, Cuckfield, West Sussex, RH17 5LJ, ,
Provision of external gas box meter.
Mr David Thackeray C/o Agent**

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

There were no letters of representation received in response to the proposed development.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

Conservation Officer: *'The meter boxes are an unfortunate addition to the façade of the building but would appear to be an unavoidable result of the proposed residential conversion. Although there will be some adverse impact on the appearance of Loriner House, the will be relatively minor, and I would not consider that a refusal on these grounds alone could be substantiated'*

TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

Parish Council: No objection.

INTRODUCTION

The application seeks planning permission for the installation of a new external gas meter boxes.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

DM/25/2049 - Conversion of existing first floor (salon) and internal alterations to provide 2 bedroom residential accommodation. Pending consideration.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application relates to Loriner House, an end of terrace three storey building with a hipped roof form. The existing building contains an existing salon at both ground and first floor level as well as a residential flat at second floor level. The existing building appears to date from the early 20th century and utilises a generally traditional design. In terms of existing facing materials, the building is composed of brick exterior walls and features partially tile clad first floor bay windows. The existing building abuts to the pavement edge to the northern side of the highway and is set within a village centre location, where local services and provisions feature regularly within the locality.

With regard to policy constraints, the site is located within the Cuckfield Built-Up Area Boundary. The site is also set within the Cuckfield Conservation Area as well as the village wide Article 4 Direction. There are a number of grade II listed buildings located nearby to the north, south and west of the site.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The proposal would install two new gas meter boxes at ground floor level to serve the existing property. The submission has been made due the Article 4 restriction this alteration to the building's principal elevation.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND LIST OF POLICIES

Planning legislation holds that the determination of a planning application shall be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Using this as the starting point the development plan for this part of Mid Sussex consists of the District Plan, Site Allocation Development Plan Document (DPD) and the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan.

National policy (which is contained in the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Policy Guidance) does not form part of the development plan but is an important material consideration.

Mid Sussex District Plan

The District Plan was adopted at Full Council on 28th March 2018.

Relevant policies:

DP26: Character and Design

DP35: Conservation Areas

Site Allocations DPD

The SADPD was adopted on 29th June 2022. It allocates sufficient housing and employment land to meet identified needs to 2031.

There are no relevant policies.

Neighbourhood Plan

Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan (Made May 2014)

Policy CNP1 - Design of New Development and Conservation

Mid Sussex District Plan 2021-2039 Consultation Draft

The District Council is reviewing and updating the District Plan. Upon adoption, the new District Plan 2021 - 2039 will replace the current District Plan 2014-2031 and its policies will have full weight. In accordance with the NPPF, Local Planning Authorities may give weight to relevant policies of the emerging plan according to the stage of preparation; the extent to which there are unresolved objections to the relevant policies; and the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the NPPF. The draft District Plan 2021-2039 (Regulation 19) is currently at Examination and stage 1 hearings were concluded on the 31st October 2024. There are unresolved objections to some of the Policies in the draft District Plan and as such, only minimal weight can be given to the Plan and this planning application has been assessed against the policies of the adopted District Plan.

Relevant policies:

DPS1 - Climate Change

DPS2 - Sustainable Design and Construction

DPB1 - Character and Design

DPB3 - Conservation Areas

Mid Sussex Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

The Council has adopted a 'Mid Sussex Design Guide' SPD that aims to help deliver high quality development across the district that responds appropriately to its context and is inclusive and sustainable. The Design Guide was adopted by Council on 4th November 2020 as an SPD for use in the consideration and determination of planning applications. The SPD is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 is a material consideration. Paragraphs 2, 8, 11, 39, 48, 131, 135, 139, 189, 207, 208, 209, 212-215, 219 & 220.

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 72(1) - Special attention to be paid to preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

Cuckfield Conservation Area Appraisal (Adopted January 2007)

ASSESSMENT

It is considered that the main issues that need to be considered in the determination of this application are as follows;

- Impact on Character, Appearance and Heritage Assets
- Impact on Neighbouring Amenities
- Biodiversity Net Gain

Impact on Character, Appearance and Heritage Assets

In terms of the impact on the Cuckfield Conservation Area, policy DP35 of the District Plan states:

"Development in a conservation area will be required to conserve or enhance its special character, appearance and the range of activities which contribute to it. This will be achieved by ensuring that:

- *New buildings and extensions are sensitively designed to reflect the special characteristics of the area in terms of their scale, density, design and through the use of complementary materials;*
- *Open spaces, gardens, landscaping and boundary features that contribute to the special character of the area are protected. Any new landscaping or boundary features are designed to reflect that character;*
- *Traditional shop fronts that are a key feature of the conservation area are protected. Any alterations to shopfronts in a conservation area will only be permitted where they do not result in the loss of a traditional shopfront and the new design is sympathetic to the character of the existing building and street scene in which it is located;*
- *Existing buildings that contribute to the character of the conservation area are protected. Where demolition is permitted, the replacement buildings are of a design that reflects the special characteristics of the area;*
- *Activities such as markets, crafts or other activities which contribute to the special character and appearance of the conservation area are supported;*
- *New pavements, roads and other surfaces reflect the materials and scale of the existing streets and surfaces in the conservation area.*

Development will also protect the setting of the conservation area and in particular views into and out of the area.

New buildings of outstanding or innovative design may be acceptable in conservation areas provided that their impact would not cause material harm to the area."

DP26 of the District Plan states:

'All development and surrounding spaces, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings and replacement dwellings, will be well designed and reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages while being sensitive to the countryside. All applicants will be required to demonstrate that development:

- *is of high-quality design and layout and includes appropriate landscaping and greenspace;*
- *contributes positively to, and clearly defines, public and private realms and should normally be designed with active building frontages facing streets and public open spaces to animate and provide natural surveillance;*
- *creates a sense of place while addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape;*
- *protects open spaces, trees and gardens that contribute to the character of the area;*

- *does not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings, including taking account of the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and noise, air and light pollution'*

Policy CNP1 of the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan states that:

'New development in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan will be permitted where it:

- a) Is designed to a high quality which responds to the heritage and distinctive character and reflects the identity of the local context of Cuckfield as defined on Map 3 - Conservation Areas and Character Areas, by way of;*
 - i. height, scale, spacing, layout, orientation, design and materials of buildings,*
 - ii. the scale, design and materials of the public realm (highways, footways, open space and landscape), and*
- b) Is sympathetic to the setting of any heritage asset and*
- c) Follows guidance in the Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans, the High Weald AONB Management Plan, and*
- d) Respects the natural contours of a site and protects and sensitively incorporates natural features such as trees, hedges and ponds within the site, and*
- e) Creates safe, accessible and well-connected environments that meet the needs of users, and*
- f) Will not result in unacceptable levels of light, noise, air or water pollution, and*
- g) Makes best use of the site to accommodate development.*

Paragraph 216 of the NPPF is relevant in this instance, stating that:

'The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.'

Paragraph 207 of the NPPF requires the applicant to describe the significance of any heritage asset affected. Significance is defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as *"The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting."* The applicant has provided a Heritage Statement in support of the application which assesses the proposals impact on the relevant heritage assets. Therefore, this requirement of the NPPF is considered to have been met.

Paragraph 208 of the NPPF requires the Local Planning Authority to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected and take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal.

Given the sites location within the Cuckfield Conservation Area, the Council's Conservation Officer has been consulted. It was noted within their response that the building is sited in prominent plot with regard to the wider Conservation Area.

Paragraphs 212 - 215 of the NPPF state:

"212. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

213. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;*

b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.*

214. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.*

215. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

The below assessment is made whilst being mindful of this guidance and having regard to the statutory duty of the Council, as the Local Planning Authority, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area in Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The proposal would install two gas box meters either side of the existing shopfront at ground floor level. These gas meters are considered to be of a limited overall size and scale. The proposed units would be brown coloured in a conservation unibox specification. It is considered that the proposal would result in a minor visual impact and although the Conservation Officer outlined that some harm would be inflicted on the appearance of the building, this harm is not sufficiently significant to warrant a refusal on this basis.

Accordingly, it is considered that the proposal would result in a neutral impact on the Cuckfield Conservation Area. The proposal would therefore comply with the provisions of Policies DP26 and DP35 of the District Plan, Policy CNP1 of the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan and the statutory duties as set out within the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenities

In terms of impact upon neighbouring amenities, Policy DP26 in part seeks to ensure that development: *'does not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings, including taking account of the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and noise, air and light pollution (see DP29);'*

The proposed gas meters would be sited at ground floor level and are not considered to give rise to an adverse impact with regard to the nearby residential amenities.

Accordingly, the proposal is considered to comply with the provisions of DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan in terms of neighbouring amenities.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Biodiversity net gain is required under a statutory framework introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Under the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain this application is comprises development below the de-minimis threshold meaning that this development is exempt from providing biodiversity net gain.

PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

To summarise, it is considered that the proposal will have an acceptable impact with regard to its impact on the Conservation Area and neighbouring amenities. As such, the application complies with Policies

DP26 and DP35 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, Policy CNP1 of the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan, the Mid Sussex Design Guide, Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Stefan Galyas