

From: Emily Wade <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 12 September 2025 14:08:29 UTC+01:00
To: "Catherine Cardin" <Catherine.Cardin@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: DM/25/1250 and 1251 Queen's Hall, High St., Cuckfield

Hi Catherine

Comments on the above planning and listed building consent applications.

Queen's Hall is a Grade II listed building located in a prominent position on Cuckfield High Street, within the Conservation Area. The building is a purpose-built library and hall in the Elizabethan style, dating from 1897-1901. The front wing of the building has a stone façade over two storeys, with a large mullioned and transomed window to each floor, and a further blank window to the gable above. This frontage building now contains the Parish offices. The large hall to the rear of the building is brick built, with a pitched tiled roof running perpendicular to the street. Internally, this hall has an impressive hammer-beam roof. The Hall has a garden space to the side and rear, which has recently been opened to the public as a nature garden, accessed from the recreation ground to the rear. There are a number of further listed buildings within the vicinity of the Hall, including to the south Marshalls, a II* listed manor house dating from c.1575.

The current proposal is for the following works:

- Installation of secondary glazing to the windows at ground and first floor to the front elevation of the building
- Replacement of two windows to the southern side elevation of the building (to the Council Chamber), on a like-for-like basis but incorporating slim-line double glazing; and
- Installation of 50 solar PV panels to the southern roof slope of the main hall.

To consider these works in turn:

- The proposed secondary glazing has been designed to minimise the impact on the appearance of the building externally and of the windows viewed internally, as well as on the historic stonework of the window surrounds. This is not considered contentious in principle, subject to detail of the finish to the framing to the secondary glazing which could be required by condition.
- To the windows to the Council Chamber it is proposed to retain and refurbish the main frames, but to replace the fixed and opening sashes on a like-for-like basis but to include slim-line double glazing. This is not considered contentious, subject to detail including of the treatment of the glazing bars which could be required by condition.
- The proposed solar PV installation to the south facing roof slope of the hall is extensive, and will have a marked impact on the appearance of this part of the building, albeit that affected views are likely to be limited to those from the side and rear gardens of the Hall (which are open to the public) and potentially from

the rear windows and gardens of adjacent properties to the south. Given the nature of the panels, which are not sympathetic to the traditional nature of the existing roof covering (clay tiles) to the hall, this extensive installation which covers a significant portion of the roof will in my opinion detract from the special architectural interest of the building, contrary to the requirements of District Plan Policy DP34, and from the positive contribution which the Hall makes to the character and appearance of this part of the Conservation Area, contrary to the requirements of District Plan Policy DP35. In terms of the NPPF I would place the harm caused to the listed building as less than substantial at around the low-mid range of that scale, and to the Conservation Area as less than substantial at the lower end of that scale. The balancing exercise set out in paragraph 215 will therefore apply, bearing in mind the requirements of para. 213 that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification, and that the conservation of such an asset should be given great weight (para. 212). These considerations stand to be balanced against the public benefits, if any, of the proposal, in the context of para. 167 of the Framework.

In summary, the proposed works to the windows to the front and side of the Hall are not considered contentious, subject to detail. The proposed solar PV installation, however, because of its position, extent and nature, will have an adverse impact on the special interest of the listed building and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, albeit that that impact will be somewhat reduced by the rearward position of the installation and the relatively restricted impact on public and private views of the building. This aspect of the proposal is contrary to the requirements of DP34 and DP35, and results in terms of the NPPF in less than substantial harm to both the listed building and Conservation Area as set out above.

If on balance the application is recommended for approval I would suggest the following conditions:

- Detailed drawings, at an appropriate large scale, to include sections and annotated to show materials and finishes, of the following:
- - typical examples of the fixed and opening sashes to the Council Chamber. Your drawings should include details of glazing bars as appropriate.
- Details of the finish to the secondary glazing to the windows to the front elevation at ground and first floor.

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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