

From: Emily Wade <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 07 October 2025 16:23:12 UTC+01:00
To: "Stefan Galyas" <Stefan.Galyas@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: Fairhaven, Abberton Field, Hurstpierpoint DM/25/1769

Hi Stefan

Comments on the above planning application.

Fairhaven is an unlisted detached house located to the south of Hassocks Road within the Hurstpierpoint Conservation Area. The house is one of a group which appear to have been constructed as a single development within the former grounds of Abberton House, a Grade II listed 18th to 19th century building located adjacent to the road, and a field to the south. The development dates from the mid-late 20th century, and comprises houses of brick and hung tile with concrete tile roofs. The buildings are not of any particular historical or architectural interest, but have a certain group value, and are broadly sympathetic in form and in the palette of roofing and facing materials to the more traditional buildings within the Conservation Area. The mature trees and garden spaces around the houses are also sympathetic to the verdant nature of this part of the village. On balance the development, including Fairhaven, makes a neutral contribution to the setting of Abberton House and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Fairhaven is particularly prominent within the setting of the listed building, being set directly to the south of it, and although there is partial screening by the trees to the boundary between the two, there will be glimpsed views of the site from the upper floors of Abberton House and the gardens around it.

The current proposal, which was not preceded by pre-application advice, is for alterations and extensions to Fairhaven including ground and first floor extensions, recladding of parts of the building including the upper storey, reroofing, solar PV panels, thermal upgrading and installation of an air source heat pump. Works within the garden include regrading with new gabion basket retaining walls and 'revised boundaries'. To consider these works in turn:

- The proposed extensions include a first floor extension to the north west corner of the building, with an adjacent part one, part two storey extension to the north east, a two storey side extension to the eastern end of the building, an infill extension to the western elevation, and a single storey extension to the south in the form of a bay window with overhanging roof. It is also proposed to introduce projecting oriel windows to the south elevation, which break up through the eaves of the building.

Whilst I do consider that there is scope for some works of rationalisation and extension of the existing building, particularly to its northern side, I have concerns regarding the scale of the currently proposed additions, which at an increase of 45% in relation to the existing built volume are in my opinion over scaled and over dominant in relation to the existing building. The manner in which the

additions wrap around the north-eastern corner of the building at 2 storeys exacerbates the harm caused.

In my opinion, this aspect of the proposal is harmful to the character and appearance of the house and of the Conservation Area, and may have an adverse impact on the prominence of the building in views from the adjacent listed building and its gardens. It is also contrary to the requirements of the adopted Design Guide, in particular Design Principles DG49 'General Principles of Extensions' which states that: *'Extensions should... 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.'* At Figure 9E, this principle also notes that *'Extensions that wrap around an existing dwelling can undermine the integrity of the original architecture.'*

Some aspects of the design of the proposed additions, including in particular the projecting oriel windows, are also in my opinion not sympathetic to the context. This aspect of the proposal therefore in my opinion requires reconsideration and significant amendments.

- It is proposed to remove the tile hanging to the upper floor of the building in favour of larch cladding, and to replace and extend the existing tile roof covering with zinc roofing. This aspect of the proposal also requires reconsideration in my opinion. As noted above, the existing palette of materials reflects those in use across the Abberton Field development. The proposed changes to the facing and roofing materials would lead to Fairhaven no longer sitting comfortably within the group of houses along the lane, but rather appearing at odds with this context. The extensive use of zinc to the roof is of particular concern as this may exacerbate the apparent scale and undue visual prominence of the extended building, including in views from Abberton House, and is a material which is not sympathetic to the general Conservation Area context. This is notwithstanding the limited use of other materials including zinc to recent much more modest additions to Whistlers to the southeast. I would recommend that this aspect of the proposal is also reconsidered
- The proposed solar PV panels are shown to the inward (south) facing roofslope of the extended northern range of the house. In this position they will not be visually prominent from normal viewpoints, and are not considered contentious, subject to detail.
- The proposed ASHP is shown on plan adjacent to the ground floor northern elevation of the house. In this position the pump should be well screened from views from outside the site, and is not considered contentious.
- The landscaping works around the house are not shown in sufficient detail on the submitted plans for meaningful comment. On site, I noticed quite extensive regrading works had taken place to the east and south of the house, where the garden has been levelled. Existing and proposed site sections should be provided; these works as well as the extent of any retaining walls should be marked on the proposed site plan. In addition, more detailed information on the proposed alterations to the boundary treatments, with all relevant works marked on the proposed site plan and typical elevations should be provided.

In summary, whilst some more minor aspects of the proposal relating to energy efficiency are not considered contentious, the proposed extensions and new facing and roofing materials are considered contentious in terms of the impact on the scale and appearance of the house, and its resulting impact on the setting of Abberton House and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Further information is also required in respect of the works to the gardens around the house. In my opinion, the best course of action would be to withdraw the current application and enter into pre-application discussions with a view to working towards an acceptable scheme of alteration and extension.

As it stands, the proposal is considered contrary to the requirements of District Plan Policies DP34 and DP35. In terms of the NPPF, I would place the harm caused to both heritage assets within the less than substantial scale, although further detail regarding the landscaping works would be required before a final assessment of the impact of the proposal overall could be made.

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>

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



No ID? You can apply for free voter ID
Find out more at
electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID
or call 0800 328 0280