

From: Emily Wade <Emily.Wade@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 21 January 2026 15:32:12 UTC+00:00
To: "Jessica Szollosi" <Jessica.Szollosi@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: The Long House, The Wilderness, Lindfield DM/25/3044

Hi Jessica

Further comments on the above planning application. As previously noted, the submitted plans are inaccurate in showing the height of the pre-existing gate and close-boarded fence to be the same as the gate and the solid, close-boarded element of the fence as installed. This is not correct- comparison of photographs (from Streetview) and the fence as built show that the height of this element has been increased, and then the trellis added on top. Also, the drawings do not show the previously existing or new gates.

Based on this corrected understanding of the proposal, I have some concerns about the height of the fence as installed and its impact on the setting of the Lindfield Conservation Area. Although there is other close-boarded fencing within the vicinity, along the Wilderness and the southern end of Francis Road, this is not a positive feature of the Area or its setting, is generally lower than the fencing installed at the Long House, and is in some cases set back from the road behind hedge and tree planting. The previously existing fencing at The Long House was lower, and well screened by planting. The fencing as installed is higher in terms of the solid close-boarded element, with the overall height further increased by the trellising set above this. The loss of the screening planting adds to the undue visual prominence and stark, inappropriately suburban appearance of the new boundary treatment, which contrasts poorly with the soft and verdant nature of the majority of the street frontage to the Wilderness. This verdancy gives a semi-rural character, which contributes positively to the setting and significance of the Lindfield Conservation Area as the heart of a centuries old rural community.

I would recommend that the trellis is removed from the fence and its height decreased to no higher than the previously existing situation, which should be shown on accurate elevations in any revised submission. The pedestrian gate should also be lowered in height and shown on any revised drawings. In addition, adequate mitigatory planting should be included in the proposal, ideally of native species sympathetic to the context. The laurel bushes as shown will not provide effective screening, particularly as they are not a continuous hedge. Instead, new hedge planting of suitable native species should be shown. Although Lindfield sits just outside the High Weald AONB, the National Landscape's recently published Planning Technical Advice Note on soft landscaping and planting plans in development proposals may be useful here ([link below](#)) (note that at p.19 this guidance highlights Portuguese Laurel as a species to avoid in these circumstances).

Position Statement: High Weald Soft Landscaping & Planting Plans in Development Proposals - High Weald National Landscape

As it stands, I consider that the proposal results in a degree of harm, through impact on setting, to the character and appearance of the Lindfield Conservation Area, contrary to the requirements of District Plan Policy DP35. In terms of the NPPF, I would regard the harm as less than substantial, within the lower range of that scale. The balancing exercise set out in paragraph 215 will therefore apply.

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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