

PL- Consultation- Conservation Officer response

Arun District Council, Civic Centre, Maltravers Rd
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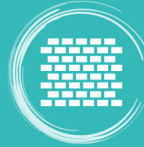
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From: Martyn White <Martyn.White@arun.gov.uk> **On Behalf Of** Conservation Officer
Sent: 25 March 2026 15:18
To: Planning.Responses <Planning.Responses@arun.gov.uk>
Cc: Harry Chalk <Harry.Chalk@arun.gov.uk>
Subject: LU/30/26/PL

Reference: LU/30/26/PL

Address: Flintstone Centre East Street Littlehampton BN17 6AW

Proposal: Replacement of existing timber single glazed windows for timber double glazed units, replacement of doors, repair works to localised areas, or the replacement of, the stone lintels that are defective as required. This application affects the setting of listed buildings, affects the character and appearance of the East Street, Littlehampton Conservation Area and is in CIL Zone 4 (Zero Rated) as other development.

The Heritage Assets

The Flintstone Centre (East Street School) and walling
The Flintstone Centre (East Street School), together with its accompanying low boundary wall, form an attractive and distinctive group of late-19th century educational buildings in Littlehampton. Built around 1871 and listed at Grade II in 1975, the former infant school is a notable example of the seaside Gothic style that emerged locally during this period. Its H-shaped plan, prominent gabled bays and pointed windows create a strong architectural composition facing East Street, while the careful use of flint and red brick reflects the vernacular traditions of Littlehampton and its surroundings.

The building’s architectural significance lies in its craftsmanship and its particularly intact use of local materials, displaying decorative brickwork, ornamental terracotta panels and a well-executed Gothic treatment that enriches its character. The associated low boundary wall which is constructed of cobbles with brick detailing and ironwork set between brick merlons, complements the school’s design and forms a high-quality boundary feature. Together, the school and wall contribute strongly to the character of the East Street Conservation Area, and the open green space in front of the school enhances the ability to appreciate its principal elevation.

Historically, East Street School illustrates an important phase in Littlehampton’s development as a growing 19th-century seaside town. Built to serve the expanding population alongside a nearby girls’ school, it represents the town’s investment in education during a period of rapid social change. Its continued use for community and educational purposes reinforces this.

The East Street Conservation Area
The East Street Conservation Area preserves what remains of Littlehampton’s historic core, shaped largely by 18th- and 19th-century development as the town evolved from a small fishing community into a popular seaside resort. Its character is defined by a rich variety of building types and scales, historic street patterns, and prominent landmarks such as St Mary’s Church and the former Manor House. Rows of modest houses and small terraces sit comfortably alongside larger formal buildings, creating a cohesive townscape unified by the extensive use of flint, brick, stucco, and traditional clay or slate roofing.

Despite modern changes to its surroundings, the conservation area retains a strong historic identity. Buildings such as Roland House, Winterton Lodge, the Flintstone Centre (former school), the Friends Meeting House, and the listed cottages and farmhouses along East Street form significant groups that collectively illustrate the town’s gradual expansion - during the 18th century, reflecting the suitability of the higher ground

for development. Flintwork is a defining characteristic, particularly well expressed in buildings such as Nos. 18–22 and 43–57 East Street and is complemented by long runs of flint boundary walls that help enclose and structure the streetscape. Landscaping, including substantial mature trees along the frontages of properties like St Joseph's Franciscan Convent, Winterton Lodge and the Flintstone Centre, reinforces the area's unity and softens the architectural variety. Tall and often intricate chimney stacks contribute further visual interest and rhythm to the roofscape. By contrast, modern development at the edge of the conservation area, such as the former supermarket and car park, lacks historic or visual connection with its surroundings and does not enhance the area's special character. Nonetheless, the conservation area remains a distinctive, well-preserved example of Littlehampton's historic growth and architectural diversity.

Comments

Windows are an important part of a building's history and can be invaluable to our understanding of historic properties. They can tell us not only of changing architectural taste but social hierarchy, building economics and technical advances. Further, they identify social history through the taxation of windows and building materials. Above all, windows are a key part of the architectural composition of a building and help to establish its character.

The proposal is for the replacement of the existing timber single glazed windows for timber double glazed units. The existing doors would be replaced, and the stone lintels would be repaired or replaced as necessary.

Whilst I appreciate the desire for more thermally efficient windows, the proposal for double glazing needs consideration as it is not always appropriate for a listed building. Historic England also provide information on the methods by which this can be considered within a listed building.

Guidance from historic England states that if windows are modern and do not contain any historic glazing, or in fact would replace more modern, inappropriate ones, there is potential to consider the use of double glazed units in a listed building. However, such units would have to be of a heritage style and not those of standard dimensions. There would also need to be an assessment of the impact of the proposal upon the significance of the building itself.

During my site visit with the agent, I noted not only the wide variety of window types across the building, but also the prevalence of modern, poor-quality or unsympathetic replacements. Given this existing inconsistency, and the absence of historic fabric of special interest in many of the current units, the proposed replacement of these windows with new, well-designed heritage double-glazed units would be acceptable. The presence of inappropriate materials and window designs within this listed building provides a clear opportunity to support the use of heritage-specification double glazing, in line with the guidance referenced above.

Traditionally, where windows have glazing bars, these form part of the structure of the window. False glazing bars applied to the surface of the window are historically incorrect, and aesthetically unconvincing. The existing glazing bars for most, if not all, of the windows are large and as a result are able to accommodate the slimmer double glazed units without the need to be increased in size. It is essential that the new glazing bars retain the proportions and profiles characteristic of each individual window design.

It is assumed that the proposed door replacements will be carried out on a like-for-like basis. If so, this element of the proposal is also acceptable.

Reference is made to repair or replacement of stone lintels. The submitted plan indicating locations for opening-up works appears logical, and the principle of these repairs is acceptable. However, further details—specifically regarding materials, appearance, and methodology—will be required. These can appropriately be secured by condition, should the application be approved.

I am also aware that the recommendation is that both the following systems are required:

- A window-based purge ventilation system controlled by CO₂ sensors (with manual override); and
- Mechanical ventilation units mounted externally at roughly 2 m height above the floor level

These systems are intended to operate together to provide adequate ventilation while minimising visual impact on the elevation. While this approach is acceptable in principle, no detailed information has been provided regarding the exact location, design, or appearance of the mechanical ventilation units. Their proposed placement on the northern elevation is considered appropriate.

Conclusion

Subject to further information which can be supplied by way of condition, I am of the opinion that the proposal will have a neutral impact on the significance of the heritage. As a consequence, it should be determined in accordance with the relevant policies within the Development Plan, along with these comments. You will also need to take into account the contents of section 66 & 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended).

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