

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/26/1214	Case Officer:	Peter Davies
Application Type:	Full County Consent Regulation 3		
Proposal:	Installation of guardrails to roof perimeters and associated access ladders		
Site:	The Windmills Junior School, Dale Avenue, Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 8LS, , ,		
Validation Date	14 May 2026	Overall Expiry Date:	16 Jun 2026
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	No Objection	Recommendation Date:	29 May 2026
Target Date:	9 Jul 2026	Recommending Officer Signature:	Peter Davies

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	0
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Signed and Agreed By:	Steven King	Date:	29 May 2026
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/26/1214

**The Windmills Junior School, Dale Avenue, Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 8LS, ,
Installation of guardrails to roof perimeters and associated access ladders
Andrew Edwards**

REPRESENTATION RECEIVED

None received.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

Environmental Protection

No objection

INTRODUCTION

The application is a Regulation 3 application by West Sussex County Council for the installation of guard rails to the roof perimeters and associated access ladders at The Windmills Junior School Dale Avenue Hassock.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

No relevant history.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application site is a primary school located to the south of Dale Avenue within the built-up area boundary of Hassocks.

The building is a large brick built building with a flat roof and white fenestration. The school is set back behind a row of dwellings along Dale Avenue with Downlands School to the west, Hassocks sports centre to the south and dwellings to the east.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The application is a Regulation 3 application by West Sussex County Council for the installation of guard rails to the roof perimeters and associated access ladders.

The proposed guardrails will follow all external edges of the buildings roof at both first and second floor levels with additional railing around rooflights across the roof. An access ladder is proposed on the north side of the building with 3 no. additional ladders proposed to access the higher roofs from the lower. The railings and ladders will be constructed from galvanised steel. The railing will have a height of 1.10 metres.

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 Hassocks 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

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.

Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan (made June 2020)

Relevant policies:

Policy 9 - Character and Design

Other Material Considerations

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 hearings were concluded on the 19th March 2026. The District Plan remains at Examination until the Inspector has published his report, until that time 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:

DPS2 - Sustainable Design and Construction

DPB1 - Character and Design

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)

National Planning Policy Guidance

ASSESSMENT

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

- Design and Character
- Impact on neighbouring properties

Design and Character

Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex 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;*
- *protects valued townscapes and the separate identity and character of towns and villages;*
- *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 Policy DP27);*
- *creates a pedestrian-friendly layout that is safe, well connected, legible and accessible;*
- *incorporates well integrated parking that does not dominate the street environment, particularly where high density housing is proposed;*
- *positively addresses sustainability considerations in the layout and the building design;*
- *take the opportunity to encourage community interaction by creating layouts with a strong neighbourhood focus/centre; larger (300+ unit) schemes will also normally be expected to incorporate a mixed use element;*
- *optimises the potential of the site to accommodate development.'*

Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan Policy 9 states:

'Development proposals will be supported where they have regard to the Hassocks Townscape Appraisal, and where their character and design takes account of the following design principles as appropriate to the nature, scale and location of the particular proposal:

1. *Is of high quality design and layout;*
2. *Contributes positively to the private and public realm to create a sense of place;*
3. *Respects the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape;*
4. *Protects open spaces and gardens that contribute to the character of the area;*
5. *Protects valued townscapes and the separate identity and character of Hassocks, Keymer and Clayton;*
6. *Does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings, including taking account of the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight, sunlight and security;*
7. *Creates safe, accessible and well connected environments;*
8. *Protects existing landscape features and contributes to the village's Green Infrastructure network;*
9. *Incorporates the use of local materials which are appropriate to the defined Local Townscape Character Area; and*
10. *Positively responds to the local vernacular character of the defined Local Townscape Character Area.'*

The existing school building is of no architectural merit with the railings to be installed in the interest of safety for maintenance of the building. The guardrailing would be visible from the surrounding areas due to the positioning along the boundary edged of the building, however would not have an adverse impact on the character of the area.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with policy DP26 of the District Plan and policy 9 of the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan.

Impact on neighbouring properties

Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 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 Policy DP29);*'

Policy 9 of the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan states that proposals will be supported when it: '*does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings, including taking account of the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight, sunlight and security.*'

Policy 9 states that proposals should not "unacceptable harm" amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants whereas policy DP26 of the MSDP states that development should not cause "significant harm". There is therefore some conflict between the District Plan and Neighbourhood Plan in this respect. Under section 38(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 if a policy contained in a development plan for an area conflicts with another policy in the development plan, the conflict must be resolved in favour of the policy which is contained in the last document to be adopted, approved or published. As such, policy 9 of the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan is considered to take precedence and therefore the test in this instance is whether the development causes unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenities as outlined above.

The proposed guardrails are to provide access to the roof for maintenance reasons only and therefore will not result in unacceptable harm to neighbouring properties.

The Councils Environmental Protection team have been consulted and raised no objection to the proposal.

As such the proposed development is deemed acceptable and comply with policy Dp26 of the Mid Sussex District plan and policy 9 of the hassocks Neighbourhood Plan.

PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of design, scale and form to the building and locality and would not cause unacceptable harm to the amenities of neighbouring properties. Therefore, the proposal accords with Mid Sussex District Plan policies DP26, policy 9 of the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan and with the relevant provisions of the NPPF. As such, no objection is raised.

Decision: No Objection

Case Officer: Peter Davies