

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/25/2411	Case Officer:	Anna Tidey
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	Demolition of existing conservatory. Proposed new oak porch and single storey side, front and rear extensions including conversion of existing garage. Part two storey extension. Roof extension and conversion with two dormers and five roof light windows. New surface and landscaping to drive with parking for two cars.		
Site:	42 Covert Mead, Handcross, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 6DP, , ,		
Validation Date	26 Sep 2025	Overall Expiry Date:	7 Nov 2025
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	17 Nov 2025
Target Date:	21 Nov 2025	Recommending Officer Signature:	Anna Tidey

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	0
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Signed and Agreed By:	Steven King	Date:	17 Nov 2025
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/25/2411

**42 Covert Mead, Handcross, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 6DP, ,
Demolition of existing conservatory. Proposed new oak porch and single storey side, front and rear extensions including conversion of existing garage. Part two storey extension. Roof extension and conversion with two dormers and five roof light windows. New surface and landscaping to drive with parking for two cars.
Mr James Benson**

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

None received.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

Southern Water: No objections.

PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

Slaugham Parish Council: No objection.

INTRODUCTION

This application seeks planning permission for the construction of an oak porch and single storey side, front and rear extensions, following the demolition of the conservatory, conversion of the existing garage, a part two storey extension, roof extension and conversion with two dormers and the addition of five roof lights. In addition a new surface and landscaping are proposed to the front drive with parking for two cars at No 42 Covert Mead to the south west of Handcross.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

SV/031/85. Extension to house at ground floor to provide utility room/study. enlargement of first floor bedrooms into new roof space. rear extension of garage. Approved July 1985.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

No 42 Covert Mead is a detached 3 bed house located on a corner plot at the head of a cul de sac of various houses on the south western side of Handcross. The house occupies a triangular plot at the end of the cul de sac and backs onto a play area at the rear. The house is screened from public vantage points from Coos Lane, which passes to the north by woodland growing along the verge.

The property is constructed in brickwork, with a plain tiled roof and white UPVC windows. The house benefits from a single garage with a lean to roofline to the south eastern side. A greenhouse has been added at the rear of the garage and store and a white UPVC conservatory on a brick plinth with a shallow hipped roofline, is also located on the rear elevation.

The immediate neighbouring house, to the east, at No 67 Covert Mead, has been substantially extended with the addition of two storey extension on the western side and a single storey extension with a lantern light roof light on the rear.

The house benefits from a private block paved access drive, frontage turning space and garage parking.

The property is located in Green and Amber Zones for Great Crested Newts, within the Built up Area boundary of Handcross and within the High Weald National Landscape (former Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty- AONB).

APPLICATION DETAILS

This application seeks planning permission for the extension of the house by the addition of a new porch and front, side and rear single storey extensions, a first floor side extension, roof enlargement and half hipped roof addition with two dormers with hipped roofs.

The proposed porch addition will extend to the front of the house by 1.45m, with a further 1.4m deep open porch canopy, by a width of 3.5m. the gabled roof of the porch will extend to a maximum height of 4.5m.

The existing garage is shown to be converted into a store with external access doors at the side and rear. To the front of this a side and front extension will project to a similar depth as the porch addition (1.4m). This addition will create a new study and will be lit by a front facing 1.7m deep by 2.4m wide square bay window. The side extension will be constructed with a hipped roofline. This will link to the porch with a small crown roofed addition to accommodate a new ground floor toilet off an enlarged hallway.

The proposed floor plans show the ground floor of the house to be reconfigured, with the existing kitchen relocated from the front to the rear of the house. A new open plan space is to be created to accommodate the kitchen by removing the wall between the current dining room and study. The new 7m wide by 3.8m deep conservatory will further increase the floorspace off the new kitchen at the rear of the house. The current kitchen space will be used as a new TV room at the front of the house.

The current property has three first floor bedrooms. The proposed plans show the extension will retain three first floor bedrooms, with the front and rear two increased in size as a result of the first floor addition and the raised roofline. The raised and altered roof form will allow the formation of a further fourth bedroom with an ensuite shower room in the loft space. The bedroom will be served by two 1.7m wide hipped roofed dormers.

Externally the changes include raising the current catslide roofline on the northwestern elevation of the house to a barn end hipped roof, with the ridge raised by approx. 0.5m. The two existing chimneys on the house are to be retained.

During the course of determining the application the applicant's agent has been asked to produce coloured up elevation plans to clarify the intended external finishes on the altered house. These have been saved to the planning file. They illustrate that the brick finish on the walls of the houses are to be largely retained. The walls of the front and side single storey additions are to be of a painted render finish. The first floor side wall of the addition on the northwestern elevation, up to the barn ended gable, are to be finished on horizontal oak cladding, inset from the front and rear brick walls.

The submitted application form and plans show the roofs on the extension are to be finished in plain tiles to match the existing. The front flat roof over the toilet and the rear roof over the glazed conservatory are shown as a single ply membrane roof finish, with lead flashings to all wall abutments and a lead roof edge profile to the projecting eaves detail.

The submitted roof plan shows the addition of two front facing, one rear facing rooflight and two side facing rooflights in the main house roof. The side addition and garage roof will include a further four rooflights. All windows and doors are to be hardwood timber factory painted with ultra slim double glazed units.

Associated with the changes to the house alterations are proposed to the frontage, to include the provision of an enlarged area for parking to accommodate two cars to the front. The existing hedgerow between the house and the next-door property at No 40 is shown to be retained as natural screening.

The gated access is to be changed to a gravel drive, edged with granite setts and a herbaceous border with fruit tree planting will be planted at the front of the extended house.

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, the Slaugham Neighbourhood Plan and Site Allocations DPD.

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:

DP16 High Weald AONB
DP21 Transport
DP26 Character and design

Site Allocations Development Plan Document

The SADPD was adopted on 29th June 2022. It allocates sufficient housing and employment land to meet identified needs to 2031.

There are no policies deemed relevant to this application.

Neighbourhood Plan

Neighbourhood Plan -Slaugham Neighbourhood Plan - made on 25th September 2019.

Policy 1 Protecting the AONB

Other Material Considerations

Mid Sussex District Plan 2021 - 2039 - Submission Draft (Regulation 19)

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 the stage 1 hearings were concluded on the 31st October 2024. There are unresolved objections to some of the Policies in the draft District Plan and as such, 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

DPS6 Health and Wellbeing
DPB1 Character and Design
DPN1 Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Nature Recovery
DPC4 High Weald AONB

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.

The High Weald Housing Design Guide 2020

The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2024-2029

High Weald National Landscape - Technical Advice Note: Dark Skies Planning Advice Note - July 2024

West Sussex County Council Guidance on Parking at New Developments (September 2020)

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024)

National Design Guide

ASSESSMENT

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

Design
Impact upon the High Weald National Landscape (AONB)
Impact on residential amenities
Parking and access
Biodiversity Net Gain

Design

Policy DP26 of the District Plan seeks to promote well located and designed development, to protect valued characteristics of the built environment for their historical and visual qualities and support sustainable communities and create accessible environments. Policy DP26 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 DP29);*
- * 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.'*

Also relevant in the determination of the application is the design guidance contained in the Mid Sussex Design Guide, which seeks good design in house alterations and extensions.

Principle DG49 states:

'Extensions should respond to the design of the original dwelling and applicant will be expected to demonstrate how local character has informed the design proposal. Extensions should also normally be designed to be well integrated with the existing scale, form and massing allow the original building to remain the dominant element of the property whether it has one or several additions.'

Extensions should typically use simple, uncomplicated building forms to complement and coordinate with the scale, form and massing of the original dwelling. The design approach may benefit from coordinating with the existing pattern of window and door openings as well as employing facing materials to match those of the existing dwelling. Otherwise it should demonstrate the appropriateness of the alternative approach.

Extensions should not result in a significant loss to the private amenity area of the dwelling.

There are two general approaches to extending a property:

- designing in the style of the existing building by closely matching its facing materials, architectural features, window sizes and proportions; and*
- designing in a contemporary style that takes its cues from key aspects of the existing building that might include its underlying form and proportions, facing materials, window design and other specific architectural features. The success of this approach is particularly reliant on high quality facing materials and finishes, and this will normally need to be demonstrated through detailed elevations and section drawings.*

Both approaches can create successful, well designed extensions that can be mutually beneficial to both the house and the wider area. All extensions and alterations should consider their impact on neighbouring properties (refer to Chapter 8 on residential amenity).'

Design Guide Principle DG50 refers to Front and Side extensions and states:

'Front and side extensions are typically visible from the public realm and will be resisted where they have an adverse impact on the street scene or the appearance of a dwelling.'

Front extensions

Front extensions are more likely to be acceptable where the building line is staggered or where the dwelling is set well back from the road. They are less likely to be acceptable in streets with a strong consistent building form as they risk disrupting the underlying order. Where front extensions are considered acceptable, they should normally be limited to a modest single storey or porch-type extension that reflect the character of the existing property.

Side extensions

Side extensions should normally be subservient to the original dwelling and typically be set-back from the front of the house to help define the original building.

The gaps between dwellings can sometimes positively contribute to articulating (for example, through the consistent rhythm of repeated houses) and adding interest in a street frontage or by providing views / visible connections to the surrounding countryside. Side extensions will therefore need to appropriately respond to the character of the street form and will not normally be accepted where they close an important gap and view'.

The Design Guide also contains Principle DG51 which specifically relates to rear extensions, and states:

'rear extensions which are not visible from the street and do not negatively impact on neighbouring properties can be expressed in many forms, including by adopting a contemporary architectural approach. With reference to DG49, they should nevertheless have consideration for the character of the existing building and the relationship of the extension with the side boundaries and adjacent buildings and gardens.'

The Design Guide also contains Principle DG52, which refers to Loft conversions and roof extensions. This states:

'A loft conversion is a space efficient means of extending the amount of living accommodation in a dwelling. Roof accommodation is normally reliant on dormer windows and rooflights to provide light and ventilation. However, if they are out of scale or out of character with the roofscape and proportions of a dwelling they can have an adverse impact on the character of both the dwelling and the streetscape.

The roof pitch and form are intrinsic to a building's character and roof extensions should be sensitive to this. Roof extensions and dormer windows that alter the existing ridge of the roof or significantly alter the roof profile of a building will not normally be acceptable, particularly on the front roof slope, and where there is a strong established roofline.

Where a clear rhythm of fenestration is established, the position and proportion of dormer windows should respond to existing windows and / or doors.

Further guidance on dormer windows and rooflights is provided in chapter 6 under sections 6.3.5 to 6.3.8.'

The addition of the proposed two roof dormers will assist in providing a greater amount of useable space with adequate headroom in the second floor bedroom. These additions have been limited to the rear facing roofslope and will therefore have limited impact upon the public views of the extended property. They are not overlarge, and have been placed above the eaves and within the larger roof slope. It is considered that the new half gabled end, the roof height increase and the addition of the two roof dormers is acceptable on this property and in this location.

The proposed extensions have been designed to reflect the design of the host building. Whilst the loft extension will raise the height of ridge in part it is considered that the overall scale of the additions will reflect the appearance of the existing house and blend in with the other alterations and additions to neighbouring houses in the cul de sac. The front and side additions that will be visible from the street facing will be subordinate to the scale of the host building and the proposed construction materials will complement the appearance of the house and its setting.

Overall the design and scale of the proposed additions are considered appropriate to the property. Consequently the design and appearance of the proposed extensions are considered to accord with Policy DP26 and with the relevant Design Guide principles.

Impact upon the High Weald National Landscape (AONB)

The proposed development is located within the High Weald National Landscape (AONB), where District Plan Policy DP16 is also relevant. This states:

'Development within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, as shown on the Policies Maps, will only be permitted where it conserves or enhances natural beauty and has regard to the High Weald AONB Management Plan, in particular;

- the identified landscape features or components of natural beauty and to their setting;*
 - the traditional interaction of people with nature, and appropriate land management;*
 - character and local distinctiveness, settlement pattern, sense of place and setting of the AONB;*
- and*
- the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage.*

Small scale proposals which support the economy and social well-being of the AONB that are compatible with the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty will be supported.

Development on land that contributes to the setting of the AONB will only be permitted where it does not detract from the visual qualities and essential characteristics of the AONB, and in particular should not adversely affect the views into and out of the AONB by virtue of its location or design'.

Slaugham Neighbourhood Plan Policy 1 is also relevant in the determination of this application. That policy states:

'Policy 1: Protecting the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The extent of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is shown on the Proposals Map.

Development proposals within the High Weald AONB will only be supported where they conserve or enhance natural beauty and have regard to the High Weald AONB Management Plan in particular:

- 1. The identified landscape features or components of landscape beauty and to their setting;*
- 2. The traditional interaction of people with nature and appropriate landscape management;*
- 3. Character and local distinctiveness, settlement pattern, sense of place and setting of the AONB; and*
- 4. The conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage.*

Small scale proposals which support the local economy and social wellbeing of the AONB will be supported where they are compatible with the conservation and enhancement of the AONB.

Development proposals on land that contribute to the setting of the AONB will only be permitted where it does not detract from the visual qualities and essential characteristics of the AONB, and in particular does not adversely affect the views into, and out of, the AONB by virtue of its location and/or design.'

Also relevant in the determination of the application are Paragraph 18 of the NPPF, which states:

'Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads 66. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.'

Footnote 66: English National Parks and the Broads: UK Government Vision and Circular 2010 provides further guidance and information about their statutory purposes, management and other matters.

A similar ethos is found within The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan.

The proposed extensions will extend to the front, side and rear of this house, which occupies an end of cul de sac position. Due to the scale, proposed materials and siting the proposed additions will not impinge on local views, or upon the wider character of the area. Consequently this application accords with Policy DP16 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and the relevant NPPF and AONB guidance.

Impact on residential amenities

District Plan Policy DP26 requires 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.'*

In addition Principle DG45 in the Design Guide refers to the need to consider privacy of existing and future residents and it is noted that privacy may be affected by the relationship of buildings to each other.

The immediate neighbouring dwellings at No 40 (to the north) and No 67 (to the south) and No 2 are the most affected by the proposed extension works.

The house at No 40 is sited some 13m (min) north of the house at No 42 and there is a thick intervening hedgerow and tree screening. The next door house at No 67 has been recently extended at the side and rear with the addition of a two storey side extension and a rear single storey extension. There are no overlooking windows in the north west facing side elevation of that property and it is considered that given the orientation and spacing of the two houses, that the proposed additions at No 42 will not cause significant harm to the privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight of the immediate residents.

The proposal therefore accords with the requirements of Policy DP26 of the District Plan and the relevant principles of the Design Guide.

Parking and access

The proposed extension will increase the bedrooms at No 42 Covert Mead from three to four. With regards to parking provision for the extended house the relevant District Plan Policy is DP21, which states:

'Development will be required to support the objectives of the West Sussex Transport Plan 2011- 2026, which are:

- o A high quality transport network that promotes a competitive and prosperous economy;*
- o A resilient transport network that complements the built and natural environment whilst reducing carbon emissions over time;*
- o Access to services, employment and housing; and*
- o A transport network that feels, and is, safer and healthier to use.*

To meet these objectives, decisions on development proposals will take account of whether:

- o The scheme is sustainably located to minimise the need for travel noting there might be circumstances where development needs to be located in the countryside, such as rural economic uses (see policy DP14: Sustainable Rural Development and the Rural Economy);*
- o Appropriate opportunities to facilitate and promote the increased use of alternative means of transport to the private car, such as the provision of, and access to, safe and convenient routes for walking, cycling and public transport, including suitable facilities for secure and safe cycle parking, have been fully explored and taken up;*
- o The scheme is designed to adoptable standards, or other standards as agreed by the Local Planning Authority, including road widths and size of garages;*
- o The scheme provides adequate car parking for the proposed development taking into account the accessibility of the development, the type, mix and use of the development and the availability and opportunities for public transport; and with the relevant Neighbourhood Plan where applicable;*
- o Development which generates significant amounts of movement is supported by a Transport Assessment/ Statement and a Travel Plan that is effective and demonstrably deliverable including setting out how schemes will be funded;*
- o The scheme provides appropriate mitigation to support new development on the local and strategic road network, including the transport network outside of the district, secured where necessary through appropriate legal agreements;*
- o The scheme avoids severe additional traffic congestion, individually or cumulatively, taking account of any proposed mitigation;*
- o The scheme protects the safety of road users and pedestrians; and*

o The scheme does not harm the special qualities of the South Downs National Park or the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty through its transport impacts.

Where practical and viable, developments should be located and designed to incorporate facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.

Neighbourhood Plans can set local standards for car parking provision provided that it is based upon evidence that provides clear and compelling justification for doing so'.

For a 3 bed property located in Hassocks the West Sussex County Council Guidance on Parking recommend 2.2 spaces should be provided, and for a 4 bed house, 2.7spaces.

The applicant's agent has demonstrated that there is adequate off street parking provision available to the property. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in this location, to accord with the aims of District Plan Policy DP21.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Biodiversity net gain is required under a statutory framework introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This is a householder application within the meaning of article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. As a householder application this development is exempt from the requirement to provide biodiversity net gain.

PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

The design and scale of the proposed extensions at No 42 Covert Mead are appropriate and will not appear out of keeping with the character and appearance of the property, within the street scene or in this part of the High Weald National Landscape. The proposed works are considered to accord with District Plan Policies DP16 and DP26, the aims of Slaugham Neighbourhood Plan Policy 1 and the Design Guide principles.

It is considered that the proposed extension works will not cause significant harm to the neighbouring amenities. The proposal accords with the aims of District Plan Policy DP26 and the relevant principles of the Design Guide.

The available access and parking provision will accord with the aims of District Plan Policy DP21.

Consequently this application is recommended for approval.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Anna Tidey