

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/25/2979	Case Officer:	Andrew Horrell
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	Proposed two-storey side extension, first floor rear extension, replacement rear porch and associated alterations		
Site:	East Cottage, Town House Farm, Church Lane, Ardingly, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 6UR,		
Validation Date	20 Nov 2025	Overall Expiry Date:	17 Apr 2026
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	19 May 2026
Target Date:	15 Jan 2026	Recommending Officer Signature:	Andrew Horrell

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	0
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Signed and Agreed By:	Steven King	Date:	19 May 2026
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/25/2979

East Cottage, Town House Farm, Church Lane, Ardingly, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 6UR

Proposed two-storey side extension, first floor rear extension, replacement rear porch and associated alterations

Gail Jansen

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

None received

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

MSDC Conservation Officer: On balance, therefore, the proposal is now considered to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the setting of the listed and curtilage listed buildings within the historic farmstead. This meets the requirements of District Plan Policies DP34 and DP35 and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF. Subject to conditions.

PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

None received

INTRODUCTION

The application seeks planning permission for a proposed two-storey side extension, first floor rear extension, replacement rear porch and associated alterations

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

AR/026/80 - Front Porch. (approved)

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The dwelling is a two-storey semi-detached hipped roofed dwelling. The dwelling is characterised by an existing flat roofed porch, face brickwork, part rear and front catslide roof and upvc doors and windows.

To the north of the property is the rear garden with hedging and close boarded fencing to fields beyond, to the south of the site is the driveway to abandoned agricultural buildings beyond with access track to Church Lane beyond, to the west of the site is the adjoining neighbour, to the east of the site is close boarded fencing and hedging to outbuildings of Townhouse beyond.

The site is outside of the built-up area of Ardingly, within the High Weald National Landscape (Formally AONB) and within the Ardingly (west) Conservation Area and is deemed to affect the setting of the listed Townhouse.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The existing flat roofed front porch to be removed approximately measures 2.85m in depth, 2.4m in width with a height of 3m.

The proposed replacement rear porch approximately measures 2.15m in depth, 1.2m in width with a height to eaves of 2.3m and an overall height of 3.4m.

The proposed two storey side extension approximately measures 6.65m in depth, 3.75m in width with a height to eaves of 4.7m and an overall height of 7.35m. A kitchen/dining room on the ground floor and a master bedroom on the first floor.

The side lean-to approximately measures 3.75m in depth, 0.7m in width with a height to eaves of 2.5m and an overall height of 3.75m. This will serve the kitchen/dining room.

The proposed first floor rear extension approximately measures 2.1m in depth, 3.2m in width with a height to eaves of 5.2m and an overall height of 7m. This serves a bathroom.

External works include the installation of two new rooflights.

Internal works include the existing ground floor kitchen altered to a shower room and a utility room. On the first-floor bedroom 2 is altered to an en-suite.

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 Site Allocations Development Plan Document and the Ardingly 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 in 2018. Relevant policies:

DP12 - Protection and Enhancement of Countryside
DP16 - High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
DP26 - Character and Design
DP34 - Listed buildings and Other Heritage Assets
DP35 - Conservation Areas

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.

Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan

Mid Sussex District Council formally 'made' the Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan part of the Local Development Plan for the Parish of Ardingly as of 18 March 2015. The policies contained therein carry full weight as part of the Development Plan for planning decisions within Ardingly.

Relevant policies:

ARD2 (A Spatial Plan for the Parish)
ARD5 (Housing Design)
ARD9 (Heritage Assets)

Other Legislation

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states '*In considering whether to grant planning permission (or permission in principle) for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.*'

Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states: '*In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any powers under any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of conservation preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.*'

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 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:

DPC1 - Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside
DPC4 - High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
DPB1 - Character and Design
DPB2 - Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets
DPB3 - Conservation Areas

Supplementary Planning Documents (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 Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2024-2029

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 is a material consideration. Paragraphs 8, 11, 131, 135, 189, 207 - 215 are considered to be relevant to this application.

ASSESSMENT

Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside

Policy DP12 of the Mid Sussex District Plan in part states:

'The countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty. Development will be permitted in the countryside, defined as the area outside of built-up area boundaries on the Policies Map, provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District, and:

- it is necessary for the purposes of agriculture; or*
- it is supported by a specific policy reference either elsewhere in the Plan, a Development Plan Document or relevant Neighbourhood Plan.'*

Policy ARD2 of the Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan states:

'Development Proposals located outside the built-up area boundary will be required to demonstrate how they conserve the AONB. In this regard, proposals should seek to address the provisions of the High Weald AONB Management Plan'.

Given the domestic nature of the proposal, the proposed extensions will conserve the character of the countryside and are deemed to comply with policy DP12 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and policy ARD2 of the Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan.

Character and Design and Impact on the Conservation Area and setting of Listed Building

Policy DP26 of the 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;*
- 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'*

Policy ARD5 of the Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan has a similar ethos stating *'The Neighbourhood Plan requires all developments, including alterations to existing buildings, to be sympathetic of the character and scale of surrounding buildings and landscape'.*

Principles DG49, DG50 and DG51 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD are most relevant.

Principle DG49 states the following:

'Extensions should respond to the design of the original dwelling and applicants 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 allowing 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:

- o Designing in the style of the existing building by closely matching its facing materials, architectural features, window sizes and proportions; and*
- o 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).'

Principle DG50 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 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 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.'

Principle DG51 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide 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 proposed two storey side extension is a modest enlargement which is subservient to the existing dwelling. Whilst it will be visible, it will use matching materials to the existing dwelling.

The proposed rear extensions are modest enlargements, which in the case of the replacement rear porch, is similar visually to the existing. In terms of the first floor rear extension, it will be subservient to the existing dwelling and will use matching materials to the existing dwelling.

Therefore, the proposal is deemed to comply with policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, policy ARD5 of the Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan and principles DG49-DG51 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide.

In terms of impact on the Ardingly (West) Conservation Area, Policy DP35 of the District Plan states:

'Development in a conservation area will be required to conserve or enhance its special character, appearance and the range of activities which contribute to it. This will be achieved by ensuring that:

- o New buildings and extensions are sensitively designed to reflect the special characteristics of the area in terms of their scale, density, design and through the use of complementary materials;*
- o Open spaces, gardens, landscaping and boundary features that contribute to the special character of the area are protected. Any new landscaping or boundary features are designed to reflect that character;*
- o Traditional shop fronts that are a key feature of the conservation area are protected. Any alterations to shopfronts in a conservation area will only be permitted where they do not result in the loss of a traditional shopfront and the new design is sympathetic to the character of the existing building and street scene in which it is located;*
- o Existing buildings that contribute to the character of the conservation area are protected. Where demolition is permitted, the replacement buildings are of a design that reflects the special characteristics of the area;*
- o Activities such as markets, crafts or other activities which contribute to the special character and appearance of the conservation area are supported;*
- o New pavements, roads and other surfaces reflect the materials and scale of the existing streets and surfaces in the conservation area.*

Development will also protect the setting of the conservation area and in particular views into and out of the area.

New buildings of outstanding or innovative design may be acceptable in conservation areas provided that their impact would not cause material harm to the area.'

Policy ARD9 of the Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan states:

'The Neighbourhood Plan requires development proposals affecting a listed building or conservation area or their setting to conserve or enhance the special quality and distinctive character of Ardingly'.

Paragraphs 207, 212 - 215 of the NPPF are most relevant and state:

'207. In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- o the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- o the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- o the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

212. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be).

This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

213. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;*
- b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.*

214. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be

demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation;*
- c) and conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.*

215. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.'

The dwelling is deemed to be within the setting of neighbouring listed Townhouse.

Policy DP34 of the District Plan is relevant and states:

'Development will be required to protect listed buildings and their settings. This will be achieved by ensuring that:

- o A thorough understanding of the significance of the listed building and its setting has been demonstrated. This will be proportionate to the importance of the building and potential impact of the proposal*
- o Alterations or extensions to a listed building respect its historic form, scale, setting, significance and fabric. Proposals for the conversion or change of use of a listed building retain its significance and character whilst ensuring that the building remains in a viable use;*
- o Traditional building materials and construction techniques are normally used. The installation of uPVC windows and doors will not be acceptable;*
- o Satellite antennae, solar panels or other renewable energy installations are not sited in a prominent location, and where possible within the curtilage rather than on the building itself;*
- o Special regard is given to protecting the setting of a listed building;*
- o Where the historic fabric of a building may be affected by alterations or other proposals, the applicant is expected to fund the recording or exploratory opening up of historic fabric.'*

The Conservation Officer has stated the following:

'The site, East Cottage, is one half of a semi-detached pair of former farm cottages dating from the mid-20th century, and associated with the historic farmstead of Townhouse Farm. This is located at the far southern end of Church Lane, in a semi-rural, edge of village position. The cottage pair are within the setting of Townhouse, which is the former farmhouse of the farmstead and is Grade II listed, and are within the western part of the Ardingly Conservation Area.

The cottage pair are of relatively recent construction, and are not of any particular historical or architectural merit, although they do make a limited contribution to the narrative of the later stages of the farmstead's development, and are of a broadly vernacular style which to an extent responds to the semi-rural context and to the traditional character of the other more historic buildings within the former farmstead. As is typical with semi-detached house pairs of this period one of their key features is symmetry- this original aspect of their design remains quite apparent despite some unfortunate alterations, as do a number of other features including half hipped roofs with a part mansard to the front and part catslide to the rear, and central and mirrored end chimney stacks.

The applicant has responded positively to the principal aspect of concern relating the draft amended plans seen previously, in removing the gablet from the side extension at first floor. The lean-to addition is retained, but I note the applicant considers the extension unworkable without this additional floor space, and on balance I would not continue to object to its inclusion. The issues with the accuracy of the drawings also appear to have been resolved satisfactorily.

On balance, therefore, the proposal is now considered to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the setting of the listed and curtilage listed buildings within the historic farmstead. This meets the requirements of District Plan Policies DP34 and DP35 and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF subject to conditions.'

The planning officer agrees with this viewpoint that the proposal preserves the character of the Ardingly (West) Conservation Area and the setting of the neighbouring listed building.

In terms of the suggested conditions, by the Conservation Officer, the agent has confirmed that matching materials (Face brickwork, plain tiles and uPVC windows) are to be used. Coupled with this, it is confirmed that the rainwater goods are partially black uPVC. Therefore, the need as suggested by the conservation officer for the new rainwater goods and external pipework to be painted metal appears to not meet the criteria for conditions set out within paragraph 58 of the NPPF.

Therefore, the proposal is deemed to comply with policies DP26, DP34 and DP35 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, ARD5 and ARD9 of the Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan, Principles DG49, DG50 and DG51 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.

Impact on Neighbouring amenities

In terms of impact on neighbouring amenities, Policy DP26 of the District Plan states that it must be demonstrated that any 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.

Given the location of the proposals away from the adjoining neighbour, the impact in terms of light and outlook is not deemed harmful.

Whilst a new first floor rear window is proposed, this serves a bathroom so is presumed to be obscure glazed, but notwithstanding this, the level of overlooking and loss of privacy towards the neighbouring garden is deemed no more harmful than the existing first floor rear windows.

Therefore, in terms of neighbouring amenities, the proposal is deemed to comply with policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.

Impact on the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The legal framework for AONBs, (also known as National Landscapes) in England and Wales is provided by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW) 2000 which at Section 82 reaffirms the primary purpose of AONBs: to conserve and enhance natural beauty. Section 84 of the CRoW requires Local Planning Authorities to *'take all such action as appears to them expedient for accomplishment of the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB'*. The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act (2023) amended section 85 of the CRoW Act, to create a new duty on relevant authorities to *'seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area' when discharging their functions in AONBs'*.

A similar ethos is found within The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan which is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications in the AONB. Policy 16 of the Mid Sussex District Plan requires proposals in the AONB to conserve or enhance natural beauty.

Paragraph 189 of the NPPF 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.'

Given the domestic nature of the proposal, it would conserve the scenic beauty of the High Weald AONB.

As such it would not have any adverse impact on the landscape quality of the AONB and it complies with the requirements of policy DP16 of the District Plan, High Weald AONB Management Plan 2024-2029 and paragraph 189 of the NPPF as the character of the AONB would be conserved.

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

In conclusion, the proposal is appropriate in terms of design and does not negatively impact on the wider appearance of this property, its countryside location, its setting to a neighbouring listed building, preserves the Ardingly (west) Conservation area and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and will not harm neighbouring amenities.

The proposal is deemed to therefore comply with Policies DP12, DP16, DP26, DP34 and DP35 of the District Plan, ARD5 and ARD9 of the Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan, the MSDC Design Guide, The High Weald Area Management Plan and the requirements of the NPPF.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Andrew Horrell