

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/26/1056	Case Officer:	Catherine Cardin
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	Demolition of existing side lean to porch, construction of a single storey rear extension, replacement single glazed windows to double glazed UPVC windows, alterations to fenestration and addition of two front facing skylights.		
Site:	High Garth, Stockcroft Road, Balcombe, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 6LG, ,		
Validation Date	28 Apr 2026	Overall Expiry Date:	5 Jun 2026
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	19 Jun 2026
Target Date:	23 Jun 2026	Recommending Officer Signature:	<i>Catherine Cardin</i>

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	0
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Signed and Agreed By:	<i>Joanne Fisher</i>	Date:	19 Jun 2026
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/26/1056

**High Garth, Stockcroft Road, Balcombe, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 6LG,
Demolition of existing side lean to porch, construction of a single storey rear extension,
replacement single glazed windows to double glazed UPVC windows, alterations to fenestration
and addition of two front facing skylights.**

Mr Richard Miller

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

None received.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

MSDC Conservation Officer

High Garth is an unlisted detached house located to the east side of Stockcroft Road within the Balcombe Conservation Area. It dates from the late 19th or early 20th century, and retains a number of period features. It makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Area.

The current proposal is for alterations and extensions including demolition of an existing side porch, construction of a single storey rear extension, replacement of single glazed windows with double glazed UPVC windows, alterations to fenestration and addition of two front facing skylights. To consider these works in turn:

- The existing side porch and doorway appear to be non-original, and their removal is not considered contentious subject to detail of the new infill brickwork.
- The proposed single storey rear extension is of some scale and sits alongside an existing addition. However, the original house is a fairly substantial building, and on balance it is considered that the cumulative impact of the additions, and the balance of scale between these and the core of the house, remains acceptable. Furthermore, the addition although visible in glimpsed views from the recreation ground to the rear of the house, will have only a limited impact on the appearance of the house in views from outside the site, particularly from public viewpoints. Subject to detail, this aspect of the proposal is therefore not considered contentious, although please note the point below with respect to the unacceptability of uPVC to windows and doors to this building.
- Whilst the installation of double glazing may not be considered contentious in principle, the use of uPVC will not be considered acceptable where this replaces timber framed windows, as this is not a material which would be considered appropriate for use on a period building within a Conservation Area. The application form suggests that there is as existing a mix of windows to the house, and I would suggest that more information is required in the form of a window survey, such as annotated photographs or elevations, to indicate the existing framing material of each window that it is proposed to replace, so that we are able to make a fully informed comment on this aspect of the proposal. Revision of the proposal to retain, or replace like-for-like, timber framed windows is also likely to be required. Where original windows are present the applicant could also consider retaining and repairing these, if possible, with slim-line double glazed units fitted into the existing frames.
- The alterations to fenestration, including new window openings to the rear elevation, and new skylights, are not considered contentious subject to detail, which would include revision of the scheme to show that uPVC will not be used for any new windows or external doors.

In summary although some aspects of the proposal are considered acceptable, others require further information and likely amendment in order to ensure that the character and appearance of the house and the wider Conservation Area are preserved, to meet the requirements of District Plan Policy DP35.

Nature Space

No comment.

Southern Water

No objection.

PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

Balcombe Parish Council had no objections to the proposed planning application.

INTRODUCTION

The application seeks planning permission for the demolition of an existing side lean to porch, the construction of a single storey rear extension, the replacement of single glazed windows to double glazed UPVC windows, with alterations to fenestration and the addition of two front facing skylights.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

No relevant history.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application property is a detached three storey dwelling. The property is characterised by red brick, white timber and uPVC windows and a plain tile roof. The property benefits from a wraparound garden and off-street parking to the side and front of the property.

The property is located within the built-up area boundary of Balcombe and within the Balcombe Conservation Area. Neighbouring properties are located to the north and south, whilst a Recreation Ground lies to the west. The public highway lies to the east.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The proposal seeks permission for the construction of a single storey rear extension, the replacement of single glazed windows to double glazed uPVC windows, with alterations to fenestration and the addition of two front facing skylights.

The proposed single storey rear extension would measure approximately 6.8 metres in width and 4.2 metres in depth. This would incorporate a pitched roof with a ridge height of approximately 4.8 metres and an eaves height of approximately 2.5 metres. Two windows and two doors are proposed on the rear (western) elevation. It is also proposed to install two windows on the side (southern) elevation. This would be finished in external materials to match the existing property.

The application also seeks to replace the existing single glazed windows with double glazed uPVC windows to match the existing dwelling.

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 the Balcombe 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:

DP16 - High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

DP26 - Character and Design

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

Neighbourhood Plan

The Balcombe Neighbourhood Plan was made on 22 September 2016.

Relevant policies:

Policy 3 - Design

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:

DPC4 - High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

DPS2 - Sustainable Design and Construction

DPB1 - Character and Design

DPB3 - Conservation Areas

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)

ASSESSMENT

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

- Impact on character and appearance of the area and heritage assets
- Impact on the High Weald AONB
- Neighbouring Amenities
- Biodiversity Net Gain

Impact on character and appearance of the area and heritage assets

The site is located within the Balcombe Conservation Area, as designated in 1984. A Conservation Area is defined as an area of "special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance".

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 preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.'

Policy DP35 of the District Plan in part states that:

'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 DP26 of the District Plan relates to character and design and requires all proposals to be well designed and reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages while being sensitive to the countryside as well as addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape. In part the policy requires proposals to be of a high-quality design and layout and includes appropriate landscaping and greenspace; and creates a sense of place while addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape.

Policy 3 of the Balcombe Neighbourhood Plan contains a similar ethos.

Principle DG49 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide relates to general principles for extensions and states that:

'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.'

Principle DG51 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide relates to rear extensions and states that:

'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.'

Paragraphs 212 - 215 of the NPPF states:

'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* listed 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; and*

c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, 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 application site lies within the Balcombe Conservation Area, where special regard must be had to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the area.

The Conservation Officer was consulted on the application and has provided a response. They considered that the demolition of the existing porch and the construction of the rear extension would not be considered contentious, subject to detail. This view is shared and agreed upon by Officers. The details of the infill brickwork can be secured by condition.

The proposed rear extension is considered to be of an appropriate scale and design in relation to the existing property. The use of a pitched roof responds positively to the architectural character of the existing building. Owing to its position to the rear, views of the extension from the public realm would be limited and largely glimpsed, such that the development would have a minimal impact on the wider street scene and a neutral impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The proposal also includes the replacement of single glazed windows with uPVC units. This element of the scheme has been considered carefully, having regard to the site's location within the Balcombe Conservation Area and the positive contribution made by the host dwelling. The Conservation Officer has raised concerns regarding the use of uPVC, advising that this material would not normally be considered appropriate for a period property within a Conservation Area, where timber windows would typically be expected in order to preserve the building's architectural character.

Notwithstanding this advice, it is acknowledged that each application must be determined on its own merits, taking into account the specific context of the site. In this instance, it is noted that the application property already displays a mix of window types and materials, and that uPVC windows are also present within the immediate and surrounding street scene. As such, the proposed replacement windows would not appear wholly incongruous within the immediate context. Furthermore, the submitted details indicate a traditional heritage-style design within appropriate proportions and glazing patterns, which would help to retain the established appearance of the dwelling.

It is acknowledged that the replacement windows would provide improved thermal efficiency, contributing towards wider objectives of sustainable development. Whilst this benefit is afforded limited weight in heritage terms, it is nonetheless a material planning consideration. In addition, limited fallback opportunities may exist under permitted development, although these are restricted within Conservation Areas and therefore carry limited weight.

Taking all of the above into account, and on balance, it is considered that the proposed replacement windows would result in a neutral impact on the Conservation Area.

The insertion of a Velux rooflight within the front roof slope has also been assessed. Given that similar rooflights are visible within the surrounding street scene, this feature is not considered to be out of keeping with the established character of the area.

Overall, the proposed extension and alterations are considered acceptable in design terms and would preserve the character and appearance of the dwellinghouse and Conservation Area, in accordance with policies DP26 and DP35 of the District Plan and policy 3 of the Balcombe Neighbourhood Plan.

Neighbouring Amenities

In terms of impact on neighbouring amenities, Policy DP26 of the District Plan states proposals should *'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'*.

To the south of the application site is Astley. Given that a separation distance of 2.2 metres would be maintained and that the proposal is single storey, it is not considered that the proposal would result in material harm to the light and outlook of this neighbouring property. Whilst the proposal includes two windows on the side (southern) elevation, these would be obscure glazed and can be secured by condition.

To the north of the application site is La Columba. Given that the proposal would largely be screened by the application property itself, it is not considered that the development would cause material harm to the amenities of this neighbouring property.

Due to the domestic nature of the proposed development, it is considered that there would not be a harmful impact in terms of noise, air and light pollution.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policy DP26 of the District Plan, and the relevant principles of the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD.

Impact on the High Weald AONB

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.

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.'

The proposal relates to alterations and extensions to an existing dwelling within the built-up area of Balcombe. The proposal seeks alterations to an existing dwelling and would therefore be viewed in the context of surrounding built form, rather than an isolated development within the wider landscape.

Given the modest scale and domestic nature of the works, the proposal would not adversely affect the landscape character or scenic beauty of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is therefore considered that the proposal would conserve the character and appearance of the AONB.

Accordingly, the proposal would comply with the requirements of Policy DP16 of the District Plan, The High Weald AONB Management Plan and paragraph 189 of the NPPF.

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 proposal is considered acceptable in respect of scale, design and appearance and would be sensitive to the existing dwelling. It is considered that the proposal would not be harmful to the High

Weald AONB, the Balcombe Conservation Area and would not be harmful to the amenities of neighbours.

The development therefore complies with policies DP16, DP26 and DP35 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, policy 3 of the Balcombe Neighbourhood Plan, and the contents of the NPPF.

It is therefore considered acceptable.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Catherine Cardin