

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/25/1083	Case Officer:	Stefan Galyas
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	Conversion of the existing bungalow's loft space into habitable accommodation and construction of a front porch extension.		
Site:	6 Knowle Close, Copthorne, Crawley, West Sussex, RH10 3LR, , ,		
Validation Date	24 Apr 2025	Overall Expiry Date:	20 May 2025
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	11 Jun 2025
Target Date:	19 Jun 2025	Recommending Officer Signature:	<i>Stefan Galyas</i>

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	0
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Signed and Agreed By:	<i>Stephen Ashdown</i>	Date:	16 Jun 2025
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/25/1083

**6 Knowle Close, Copthorne, Crawley, West Sussex, RH10 3LR, ,
Conversion of the existing bungalow's loft space into habitable accommodation and construction
of a front porch extension.
Ms Caroline Wilmot**

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

There were no letters of representation received in response to the proposed development.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

None received.

TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

Parish Council: Defer to officer.

INTRODUCTION

The application seeks planning permission for the development of a side box dormer, a front porch, the installation of roof lights to the northern roof pitch and the part re-cladding of the gable ends.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

DM/15/1954 - Oak (T1) - prune lower canopy by removing 5 no. lowest small diameter branches.
Reduce weight of remaining lower branches by reducing length by up to 1.5m. Raise canopy by 0.75m.
Permission 16.07.2015.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application relates to 6 Knowle Close, a detached chalet style bungalow set to the eastern side of a cul-de-sac with a pitched roof. The existing dwelling is set back from the pavement edge by a front lawn and driveway and the property projects out to its principal elevation through a single storey flat roof element. The site is afforded garden amenity space to the rear and the dwelling has not been previously extended to its rear elevation. The existing dwelling is composed of brickwork exterior walls, painted vertical timber cladding within the gable ends, a clay pantile roof, a single ply flat roof membrane to the single storey elements, white aluminium windows and white aluminium timber doors.

With regard to the site's locality, there are a number of other chalet bungalow style properties to the eastern side of the cul-de-sac which appear to have been extended and altered through additions at loft level.

The site is within the built-up area for Copthorne as defined in the District Plan (DP) and there is a tree preservation order to the west of the site.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The proposal would develop a box dormer to the southern roof pitch which would measure at around 4m in length, 7.9m in width and 2.3m high. Proposed external materials would comprise horizontal cementitious cladding in a soft green colour and a single ply flat roof membrane.

A new single storey front porch would be developed as part of the proposal which would measure at around 1.1m in length, 3.1m in width, have an eaves height of 2.2m and a ridge height of 3.6m. The proposed porch would be constructed of facing brickwork with vertical cementitious cladding in soft green and a clay pantile pitched roof.

The properties gable ends would be partially re-clad in cementitious in soft green and would install rooflights to the properties northern roof slope. Throughout the proposed development, white aluminium and RAL 7016 anthracite grey windows and doors would be utilised.

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 Copthorne 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:

DP21: Transport

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.

Neighbourhood Plan

Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan (Made June 2021)

The Relevant Policies:

CNP1.1 Character and Distinctiveness

CNP1.2 Local Amenities

CNP1.6 Household Extensions

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 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:

DPS1 - Climate Change

DPS2 - Sustainable Design and Construction

DPB1 - Character and Design
DPT4 - Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure

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)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 is a material consideration. Paragraphs 2, 8, 11, 39, 48, 115-117, 131, 135 & 139.

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 Amenities
- Highways Impact
- Biodiversity Net Gain

Design and Character

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:

- o is of high-quality design and layout and includes appropriate landscaping and greenspace;*
- o 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;*
- o creates a sense of place while addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape;*
- o protects open spaces, trees and gardens that contribute to the character of the area;*
- o 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'*

With regard to the impact on the character and appearance of the area, Policy CNP1.1 of the Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan notes:

'Proposals will be supported where they can sustain or reinforce the positive aspects that make up the individual character and distinctiveness of each Character Area, as defined on the Policies Map in which they sit.'

In this instance, the application site lies within the Post War Copthorne zone as identified by the Policies Map. Among other matters, CNP12 requires development within this area to be of a high quality and pay regard to its immediate setting.

Policy CNP1.6 of the Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan states that:

'Extensions to existing buildings will be supported provided they adhere to other policies in the development plan and:

- (a) Are no higher than the existing building.*
- (b) Do not conflict with traditional boundary treatment of an area.*
- (c) Use materials which are compatible with materials of existing/ surrounding buildings'.*

Principle DG49 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide states:

'Extensions should typically use simple, uncomplicated building forms to compliment 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.'

Additionally, Principle DG50 as set out within the Design Guide, relates to 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.'

With regard to loft conversions and roof extensions, Principle DG52 notes that:

'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.'

It is considered that the application site is viewed within the context of a cluster containing five dwellings set to the eastern side of the cul-de-sac. There are two dwellings to the north at No.7 and 8 which have previously been extended at loft level through the development of side dormers and have been extended in varying forms previously.

Whilst the side dormer is not considered to be entirely subservient towards the existing roof slope, it is considered that this would not appear overly incongruous given the sites context. The proposed development in this regard is considered to mirror the appearance of Nos 7 and 8. Accordingly, the proposed dormer is considered to result in an acceptable appearance.

The proposed front porch would utilise a pitched roof design and would entirely be contained to a single storey size and scale. This porch feature is considered to help establish the main point of entry to the building and would wholly appear subservient to the main dwelling. The use of the pitched roof design is also considered to mirror the existing dwelling.

Windows would be installed to both gable ends at first floor level which would likely give rise to a perceived larger overall size and scale when compared to the existing chalet bungalow. Furthermore, the re-cladding of the dwelling in soft green cementitious cladding to either gable end or to the proposed dormer would likely give rise to a more contemporary appearance. Nevertheless, this is not considered to be overly incongruous provided the other more contemporary alterations within the cluster to which the property is viewed.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policy DP26 of the District Plan, Policies CNP1.1, CNP1.6 and CNP12 of the Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan and the relevant principles of the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenities

Policy CNP1.2 of the Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan states that proposals should not cause 'unacceptable harm' to neighbours amenity whereas policy DP26 of the MSDP states that development 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. 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 CNP1.2 of the Copthorne 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 dormer would include three side windows which would face out towards the neighbouring property immediately to the south at No.5. There is a side (north) facing window at the neighbouring property which uses an unobscured glazed finish. Provided that the proposed side dormer windows would be set at an elevated position and would offer views towards the neighbouring site to the south, a condition ensuring these windows remain in an obscure glazed finish is considered relevant and necessary in the instance that permission is granted. It is noted both bedrooms at first floor level would also be served by new windows to both the principal and rear elevations within the gables. As such, the side elevation windows serving habitable rooms would not be the sole primary windows and further outlook would be offered through the unobscured glazed windows to the alternative elevations. Accordingly, the combination of the obscure glazed side windows with the unobscured glazed principal and rear windows are considered to be sufficient in meeting the needs of the current and future occupiers of the dwelling.

There would be some rooflights installed to the proposed side (north) roof pitch which would serve the two first floor bedrooms. These openings are considered to be contained at a high level along the roofslope and therefore would be more likely used to serve light rather than offer outlook. As such, it is not considered that these would result in a significant overlooking impact.

Accordingly, the proposal is considered to comply with the provisions of DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and Policy CNP1.2 of the Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan in terms of neighbouring amenities.

Highways Impact

Paragraph 116 of the NPPF states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. Additionally, Policy DP21 of the District Plan requires development proposals to protect the safety of road users and pedestrians.

Policy CNP15 of the Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan requires developments to provide sufficient car parking spaces to meet the provisions of the latest West Sussex County Council parking guidance.

The number of bedrooms would be increased from two to four bedrooms and therefore the off-road parking demand would rise from two spaces to three. Whilst the proposal would not extend the existing driveway space, the integral garage would be maintained as well as the existing driveway which likely would facilitate sufficient space for one car. There are no on road parking restrictions nearby along Knowle Drive. It is therefore considered that the application would not be refusible on the shortfall in off-road parking spaces.

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, will not negatively impact on the host dwelling nor its immediate setting, will not harm neighbouring amenities and result in an acceptable highways impact.

The proposal will comply with Policies DP21 and DP26 of the District Plan, Policies CNP1.1, CNP1.2, CNP1.6, CNP12 and CNP15 of the Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan, the MSDC Design Guide and the requirements of the NPPF.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Stefan Galyas