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DESIGN STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF A FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR A GROUND FLOOR SIDE AND TWO STOREY REAR EXTENSION TO ADAPT EXISTING 1-BED FLATS INTO 2-BED AT 36 & 38 BUCKHURST WAY, EAST GRINSTEAD RH19 2AJ

Site and Existing Building

The application site, known as 36–38 Buckhurst Way, lies within a well-established residential area of East Grinstead within Mid Sussex District. The surrounding context is characterised by a consistent pattern of two-storey semi-detached and terraced houses, most of which were constructed during the mid-20th century. The prevailing architectural form consists of brick and render elevations under tiled pitched roofs, creating a coherent suburban character.

The existing property is a two-storey semi-detached dwelling with a traditional pitched roof and front gable, featuring red brickwork and clay roof tiles. The property currently functions as two self-contained flats with associated front and rear gardens and a modest driveway offering off-street parking for two vehicles.

The dwelling sits within a rectangular plot of moderate depth, with the rear garden extending to the west. The site is generally level, and there are no significant landscape or topographical constraints.

The locality benefits from close proximity to everyday amenities, including local shops, schools, and health facilities, all within walking distance. East Grinstead town centre and railway station are easily accessible, providing regular services to London and other regional centres. Several local bus routes operate nearby, offering sustainable transport choices.

The site does not lie within a conservation area and is not subject to any listed building designation or Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)

Site Photos



Front Elevation



Rear Elevation



Proposal

This application seeks full planning permission for:

- Reconfiguration and extension of the existing self-contained units to meet the National Space standards and increase the sizes of the flats
- A ground floor side extension; and
- A two-storey rear extension.

The development will deliver extensions to the existing two self-contained units into two high-quality residential units compliant with the National Space Standards, configured as follows:

- Flat 1 (Ground Floor Flat):

- Two bedrooms
- Gross internal area of 68 sqm
- Access to private rear garden
- Separate Entrance
- Compliant with NDSS standards for a two-bedroom, three-person flat

- Flat 2 (First Floor Flat):

- One/two bedrooms
- Gross internal area of 66.8 sqm
- Access to private rear garden
- Separate entrance and internal staircase
- Meets NDSS standards for a one/two-bedroom, three-person unit

The proposal will maintain the property's residential appearance and will not alter the established pattern of front building lines or roofscapes along Buckhurst Way.

Parking for two vehicles will remain to the front, with hardstanding retained and, where necessary, improved to ensure adequate drainage and visual quality.

The proposal provides a balanced mix of dwelling sizes, supporting local housing needs by retaining smaller units suitable for individuals, couples, or downsizing residents, while maintaining the overall domestic scale of the existing property.

The design approach is based on respect for local character, proportion, and materials, ensuring the development integrates seamlessly within the established streetscape.

The ground floor side extension is designed with a modest width, ensuring it reads as a subordinate addition to the main dwelling. Its roof will be pitched, ensuring a coherent visual relationship with the original house and adjoining property.

The two-storey rear extension is proposed to project modestly from the existing rear elevation. The ridge and eaves heights are aligned with the existing dwelling, and roof pitches are replicated to ensure the addition appears as a natural continuation of the host building.

Materials:

- Walls: Facing brickwork and render to match the existing building in colour, texture, and bond.
- Roof: Pitched roof using clay tiles to match existing.
- Windows and Doors: to match original building's doors and windows.

The chosen materials and finishes ensure the proposal remains in keeping with both the host building and the surrounding architectural vernacular, achieving visual harmony across the development.

Internally, both flats will provide well-proportioned rooms, generous storage space, and good levels of natural daylight. Layouts have been optimised to ensure privacy between units and to enhance the sense of independence for each household.

Local Precedents

No.38 and no.40 Buckhurst Way is a semi detached pair. No.40 has a previously approved two storey rear extension. The proposals for no.38 are to mirror the proposals of no.40



40 Buckhurst Way

Planning History.

GR/215/78- Rear extension to ground floor flat. – Approved - 14 Sep 1978

Planning Policy

The proposal has been assessed in the context of national and local planning policy, primarily the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023) and the Mid Sussex District Plan (2014–2031).

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023):

Paragraph 11: Supports the efficient use of previously developed land and promotes sustainable development.

Paragraphs 60–63: Encourage a sufficient supply of homes through the diversification of housing types and sizes to meet local needs.

Paragraph 130: Requires developments to be visually attractive, sympathetic to local character, and create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Paragraph 134: States that development achieving good design should be approved where it enhances the overall quality of the area.

Mid Sussex District Plan (2014–2031) – Relevant Policies:

DP12 – Sustainable Rural Development and the Countryside: Supports sustainable residential development in existing settlements.

DP24 – Character and Design: Requires high-quality design that reinforces local character, scale, and materials.

DP26 – Accessibility: Encourages inclusive design and access for all residents.

DP28 – Housing Mix and Type: Supports provision of smaller homes to meet local housing demand.

DP37 – Trees, Green Infrastructure, and Biodiversity: Ensures that development protects and enhances the local green infrastructure and biodiversity.

DP41 – Flood Risk and Drainage: Requires developments to incorporate sustainable drainage and avoid increasing flood risk.

The proposal aligns with the objectives of both the NPPF and the District Plan by making efficient use of an existing building, providing additional housing choice in a sustainable location, and delivering a design that enhances local character.

Planning Assessment

Principle of Development:

The property lies within the built-up area boundary of East Grinstead, where residential development and conversions are acceptable in principle. The improvement of the size of the existing flats would align with the local housing objectives, promoting efficient land use and diversifying housing supply modestly increasing the visual density or scale.

Design and Character:

The proposed extensions respect the scale and form of the host dwelling, maintaining the existing ridge height and rooflines. The massing has been carefully considered to avoid any visual dominance or incongruity when viewed from Buckhurst Way. Matching materials and detailing ensure continuity within the streetscape. The resulting building will remain harmonious and balanced in proportion, consistent with Policy DP24.

Residential Amenity:

The design ensures that both flats will enjoy high-quality living conditions, with appropriate levels of privacy, daylight, and outdoor space. The rear and side extensions are designed to prevent overlooking or overshadowing neighbouring gardens, maintaining amenity for adjacent residents in accordance with Policy DP26.

Access and Parking:

Each flat will retain its separate and clearly identifiable entrance, ensuring accessibility and privacy. The existing forecourt provides sufficient off-street parking in accordance with Mid Sussex standards, while the site's proximity to public transport supports sustainable travel choices.

Environmental Sustainability:

By converting and extending the existing structure rather than demolishing and rebuilding, the proposal reduces embodied carbon and waste generation. The new construction will incorporate energy-efficient materials, high-performance glazing, and improved insulation. Sustainable drainage measures will ensure surface water run-off is managed effectively in accordance with Policy DP41.

Housing Quality and Mix:

The proposal contributes positively to local housing supply by providing two well-sized, high-quality flats that meet NDSS standards. These units will cater to small families, professionals, or older residents seeking smaller, low-maintenance accommodation — supporting the aims of Policy DP28.

Conclusion

The proposed extensions at 36–38 Buckhurst Way represent a carefully considered and well-designed residential development that enhances the local housing offer while maintaining the character of the surrounding area.

The design responds sensitively to the existing building, using matching materials and proportions to ensure visual continuity. The scheme will not cause harm to neighbour amenity, parking, or local infrastructure. It supports sustainable development by reusing an existing fabric of the dwelling, improving the circulation and size of the existing residential units in a sustainable location close to services and public transport.

In summary, the proposal:

- Makes efficient use of existing land and housing stock;
- Provides two high-quality residential units that meet national space standards;
- Respects local character and neighbouring amenity; and
- Aligns fully with the aims of the NPPF (2023) and the Mid Sussex District Plan (Policies DP12, DP24, DP26, DP28, DP37, and DP41).

For these reasons, it is considered that the proposed development constitutes a sustainable and policy-compliant scheme and we seek the approval for the works from the Local Planning Authority.