



Planning Statement

Change of use of the existing vacant social club (use Class F2) to six residential units (use Class C3), with a first floor extension proposed above the existing ground floor addition to the front of the building, together with the installation of new windows, roof lights, solar panels and heat pumps and a bin and cycle store

**Royal British Legion Social Club,
Woodland Road, Hassocks, West Sussex,
BN6 8HE**

**Author: Justin Reid
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Just Property
Planning

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning statement seeks to support a planning application to Mid Sussex District Council for the Change of use of the existing vacant social club (use Class F2) to six residential units (use Class C3), with a first floor extension proposed above the existing ground floor addition to the front of the building, together with the installation of new windows, roof lights, solar panels and heat pumps and a bin and cycle store at Royal British Legion Social Club, Woodsland Road, Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 8HE.
- 1.2 This planning statement seeks to demonstrate that the proposed development accords with national, regional and local planning policies.
- 1.3 The following documents have been submitted in support of this planning application:
 - Full drawing set – Job no: DM417 – Date of issue: 6th February 2026
 - Design and Access Statement – Date of issue: February 2026
 - Planning Statement – Date of issue: February 2026
 - Noise Impact Assessment – Ref: 2127.Rep.NIA – Date of issue: 28th January 2025
 - Energy Statement for Planning – Job no: 6912, Issue no 2 – Date of issue: February 2026
 - Sustainability Statement – Job no: 6912, Issue no 2 – Date of issue: February 2026
 - Financial Viability Assessment – Date of issue: February 2026

2 The Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The application site is situated on the Eastern side of Woodland Road, Hassocks and comprises a part-single, part two-storey building with an adjoining single storey side extension. The front of the site is hard landscaped and accommodates 6 car parking spaces.
- 2.2 The subject building is currently vacant, however it was formerly a branch of the Royal British Legion, which is a social club for current and former military personnel. The existing building comprises a bar, lounge and office space at ground floor level and a games room at first floor level.
- 2.3 The existing site fronts onto Woodland Road, a residential street comprising dwellings which vary with regards to their scale, height, style and design.
- 2.4 The site is in close proximity to Keymer Road which is a street predominately comprising mixed use buildings (commercial at ground floor and residential above).
- 2.5 The application site does not contain a listed building, nor is the site situated within a conservation area or subject to any designations.



3 Relevant Planning History

- 3.1 Planning application reference: KY/043/74 relates to the retention of a temporary beer store. This application was granted planning permission on 21st October 1974 and renewals of this planning permission were granted on 22nd March 1977, 27th March 1979, 24th June 1980 and 5th June 1981 retrospectively (Planning application references: KY/004/77, KY/010/79, KY/029/80 and KY/026/81).
- 3.2 Planning application reference: KY/054/76 relates to first floor additions and alterations. This application was refused planning permission on 22nd March 1977 and an appeal was dismissed on 20th June 1978 following a public inquiry.
- 3.3 Planning application reference: KY/003/77 relates to the display of one double sided projecting box sign. This application was refused on 22nd March 1977 and an appeal was dismissed on 30th September 1977.
- 3.4 Planning application reference: KY/071/79 relates to the erection of first floor and two storey side extensions to front part of existing building to provide extra headquarters and club accommodation. This application was refused planning permission on 27th November 1979.
- 3.5 Planning application references: KY/064/80 and KY/002/82 both relate to the reconstruction of a corrugated iron rear part of building with 2 storey and cellar permanent construction and reconstruction of single-storey timber front part of building with single-storey permanent construction all for existing use as headquarters and club. These applications were granted planning permission on 23rd March 1982 and 30th December 1980 respectively.
- 3.6 Planning application reference: KY/066/86 relates to the demolition of entrance porch and erection of a single storey side extension. This application was granted planning permission on 5th January 1987. An amendment to this application involving render of the porch was approved in 29th May 1987.
- 3.7 Planning application reference: KY/012/95 relates to Duct work to air handling unit on roof of single storey section. This application was granted planning permission on 16th June 1995.
- 3.8 Planning application reference: DM/25/0393 relates to re-application reference: DM/24/1030 relates to Change of use of the existing vacant social club (Use Class F2) to

co-working studios (Use Class E), with a first floor extension proposed above the existing ground floor addition to the front of the building, together with the installation of new windows, roof lights, solar panels and heat pumps and a bin and cycle store. This application was granted planning permission on 17th April 2025.

4 Planning Policy Context

4.1 This section of the statement identifies the national, regional and local policies which are of most relevance to the proposal. We have sought to ensure that the proposed development accords with all the relevant planning policy guidance.

4.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), (2024)

Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031, (2018)

4.3 Mid Sussex District Council are in the process of reviewing and updating the District Plan. The District Plan 2021-2039 was submitted for Examination on 8th July 2024. However this document only be afforded limited weight at this stage. Accordingly, the relevant policies of the adopted Development Plan remain applicable, as set out below:

4.4 Policy DP1 – Sustainable Economic Development

4.5 Policy DP3 – Village and Neighbourhood Centre Development

4.6 Policy DP4 - Housing

4.7 Policy DP5 – Planning to Meet Future Housing Need

4.8 Policy DP6 – Settlement Hierarchy

4.9 Policy DP17 - Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

4.10 Policy DP20 – Securing Infrastructure

4.11 Policy DP21 - Transport

4.12 Policy DP25 - Community Facilities and Local Services

4.13 Policy DP26 - Character and Design

4.14 Policy DP27 – Dwelling Space Standards

4.15 Policy DP28 – Accessibility

4.16 Policy DP29 – Noise, Air and Light Pollution

4.17 Policy DP30 – Housing Mix

4.18 Policy DP38 – Biodiversity

4.19 Policy DP39 - Sustainable Design and Construction

Mid Sussex District Council Site Allocations Development Plan Document, (2022)

4.20 Policy SA38 – Air Quality

Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2031, (2020)

4.21 Policy 5 – Enabling Zero Carbon

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- 4.22 Policy 9 – Character and Design
 - 4.23 Policy 12 – Community Facilities
 - 4.24 Policy 14 – Residential Development Within and Adjoining the Built-Up Area Boundary of Hassocks

Other material planning documents

- 4.25 Mid Sussex Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document SPD (November 2020)
- 4.26 WSCC Guidance on Parking at New Developments (Sept 2020)
- 4.27 National Design Guide (2021)

5 Planning Justification

Principle of Development

- 5.1 The existing site was formerly a branch of the Royal British Legion, which is a social club for current and former military personnel. Therefore, the existing building fails into the category of a 'community facility/local service' (Use Class F2). The site is in a built up residential area of Hassocks and the proposal seeks to provide six residential units.
- 5.2 Policy DP25 (Community Facilities and Local Services) states '*Where proposals involve the loss of a community facility, (including those facilities where the loss would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs locally) evidence will need to be provided that demonstrates:*
- *that the use is no longer viable; or*
 - *that there is an existing duplicate facility in the locality which can accommodate the impact of the loss of the facility; or*
 - *that a replacement facility will be provided in the locality'*
- 5.3 The Royal British Legion (RBL) moved out of the property in January 2023 and the building has sat vacant since. In justification for the proposed Change of Use, it is important to note the former RBL club had already ceased operation as part of a wider, strategic move away from local physical clubs due to declining membership, changing needs, and financial unviability. Its closure did not represent the loss of a utilised community asset. This is discussed in detail within the Financial Viability Assessment appended to this application.
- 5.4 Policy DP4 (Housing) highlights the need for housing within the area. This policy states '*The District's OAN is 14,892 dwellings over the Plan period. Provision is also made of 1,498 dwellings to ensure unmet need is addressed in the Northern West Sussex Housing Market Area. There is a minimum District housing requirement of 16,390 dwellings between 2014 – 2031. The Plan will deliver an average of 876 dwellings per annum (dpa) until 2023/24. Thereafter an average of 1,090 dpa will be delivered between 2024/25 and 2030/31, subject to there being no further harm to the integrity of European Habitat Sites*

in Ashdown Forest'. Policy 14 of Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan also acknowledges the need to provide '*appropriately sized, affordable and sustainable housing*'.

- 5.5 For reasons mentioned above and outlined within the Financial Viability Assessment, it has been demonstrated that the former and lawful use is no longer viable, and the redevelopment of this site to provide six residential units would be consistent with the objectives of the local plan.

Design

- 5.6 Policy 26 (Character and Design) of Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 requires development to be of a high-quality design and create a sense of place whilst addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape.
- 5.7 Policy 9 of the Neighbourhood Plan relates to character and design and expects that development is of high-quality design and layout, contributes positively to the private and public realm to create a sense of place, and respects the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape.
- 5.8 The Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD is intended to inform and guide the quality of design for all development across the District. Section 2 of this guide expresses the need for applicants to understand the context and character of their site and establish the constraints and opportunities that will guide their proposals. Section 6 relates to high quality and sustainable building design, with particular emphasis placed upon principle DG37 which encourages that sustainability is at the forefront of the proposal at the design stage. This stance is also reflected under policies DP39 of the District Plan and 5 of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.9 Woodsland Road has a varied street scene that is predominantly residential, with a mix of dwelling types and styles. The subject site itself comprises three linked structures, which was referred to as Blocks A, B and C in the pre-application submission. Block A is a two storey brick building dating from 1970s with uPVC glazing and semi dormer windows set within in a concrete tiled roof, Block B is a single storey structure which sits in front of Building A, and is of a similar plan dimension, of painted brick construction with a felted flat roof and Block C is a single storey

structure situated to the Northern side of the site. The existing building is of poor quality and does not hold architectural merit.

- 5.10 The proposal involves the refurbishment of the existing building structure and erection of a first floor extension. The roofs will be clad in terracotta tiles, which will also be hung on the facades, over existing brickwork & new timber framing. The windows will be PPC aluminium, set within projecting aluminium reveals in the tile hung facades. Roof lights on north facing pitches, and solar panels on south facing pitches will maximise the energy efficiency of the building and utilise natural light.
- 5.11 The proposed first floor extension would be subservient, taking into account the scale of the main building and other buildings along Woodland Road. The roof design of the proposed addition would introduce an architectural feature to the site which would integrate well with the main building. The use of high-quality traditional materials and glazing would introduce a contemporary addition which would significantly enhance the visual amenity of the site.
- 5.12 For these reasons mentioned above, the design of the development is in accordance with planning policies.

Neighbouring Amenity Impact

- 5.12 Policy DP26 (Character and Design) states 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. Policy DP29 also echoes the objectives of this policy.
- 5.13 Taking into account the former and lawful use of the site as a social club which accommodated large groups of persons, the proposed use of the site would not result in the intensification of activity/movement onsite and thus would not increase noise generation at the property.
- 5.14 The existing site has 2 wall mounted A/C units to the Southern side of the building, which would be replaced by 2 new ASHPs to the rear of the building. These units will

be at least 12.5m away from the nearest neighbouring habitable room. At this distance, under A7/W55 conditions, the proposed ASHPs will produce a < 34dB sound pressure level. This is below the recommended maximum output of < 35dB, as per the CIEH Heat Pumps Professional Advice Note.

- 5.15 In respect of the proposed first-floor addition, its scale would mirror that previously approved under planning reference DM/25/0393. In assessing that scheme, the case officer concluded that “the proposal is considered to result in an acceptable impact” in relation to neighbouring amenity.
- 5.16 The current proposal includes side facing windows at both ground and first floor levels. The ground floor windows to the South and East elevations do not overlook neighbours. There are two proposed windows to the South elevation at first floor, one will be set back behind a roof terrace with a high solid balustrade to prevent overlooking, and the other will have obscured glazing. There is also a proposed window to the East elevation at first floor, however this will also be set back behind a roof terrace with a full height obscured glazed screen. Therefore the proposal would not result in any unacceptable privacy impacts.
- 5.17 The current proposal would not give rise to any additional amenity impacts beyond those already accepted and should therefore be regarded as acceptable in this respect.

Transportation (Car and Cycle)

- 5.18 Policy DP21 (Transport) states proposals should provide *‘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’*.
- 5.19 The application site is situated 0.2miles / 3 minute walking distance from Hassocks train station and there are bus routes which run along Keymer Road, 200ft / 1 minute walking distance from the site. Due to the accessibility of public transport, it is highly likely the users of the site would utilise these transportation modes.

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- 5.20 The six existing car spaces onsite will be retained, equating to one per unit. Considering the size and occupancy of the building, we consider the quantity of car parking spaces proposed will be sufficient for the users of the site.
- 5.21 The proposal would also result in the provision of cycle storage for six bicycles, equating to one per unit, located on the pedestrian walkway to the north of the site.
- 5.22 The car and cycle provision is in accordance with highways/transportation planning policies.

Sustainability

- 5.23 Policy DP39 (Sustainable Design and Construction) states development should seek to *'Minimise energy use through the design and layout of the scheme including through the use of natural lighting and ventilation'* and *'Maximise efficient use of resources, including minimising waste and maximising recycling/ re-use of materials through both construction and occupation'*.
- 5.24 The proposal seeks to reuse as much of the existing fabric as possible, minimising demolitions and waste. The provision of ASHPs and photovoltaic panels also seek to maximise energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions.
- 5.25 An Energy statement (prepared by T16 Design) accompanies this planning submission, this report assesses the predicted energy performance and carbon dioxide emissions of the proposed development in the context of local and nationwide policy requirements and best practice methods. The energy statement confirms the proposal would result in a reduction of carbon emissions by 100%. This would accord with the objectives of Policy DP39.

Biodiversity

- 5.26 Policy DP38 (Biodiversity) states development should *'contribute and take opportunities to improve, enhance, manage and restore biodiversity and green infrastructure, so that there is a net gain in biodiversity'*.

5.27 Development proposals that do not affect a priority habitat and impact less than 25 square metres of on-site habitat are exempt from the statutory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirement. Notwithstanding this exemption, the proposal incorporates soft landscaping measures that would materially enhance the site's biodiversity value, thereby delivering a net gain in accordance with the objectives of Policy DP38.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 It has been demonstrated the proposed development would be acceptable in principle, will preserve the character and appearance of the area, will not cause significant harm to neighbouring or future residential amenity and will not result in any adverse highway impacts. Therefore the proposal is in compliance with national, regional and local planning policies. We therefore trust the Local Planning Authority will be in support of the proposal and grant planning permission for Change of use of the existing vacant social club (use Class F2) to six residential units (use Class C3), with a first floor extension proposed above the existing ground floor addition to the front of the building, together with the installation of new windows, roof lights, solar panels and heat pumps and a bin and cycle store at Royal British Legion Social Club, Woodland Road, Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 8HE.



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www.justpropertyplanning.com



justin@justpropertyplanning.com



+447956414489