

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/26/0271	Case Officer:	Tracie Axford
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	Retrospective conversion of garage into lounge/utility room (without altering front of the property)		
Site:	130 Renfields, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 4UG, , , ,		
Validation Date	10 Feb 2026	Overall Expiry Date:	31 Mar 2026
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	1 Apr 2026
Target Date:	7 Apr 2026	Recommending Officer Signature:	Tracie Axford

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	0
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Signed and Agreed By:	Stephen Ashdown	Date:	1 Apr 2026
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/26/0271

**130 Renfields, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 4UG, , ,
Retrospective conversion of garage into lounge/utility room (without altering front of the property)
Mrs Gemma Lintott**

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

None received

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

None

HAYWARDS HEATH TOWN COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

Haywards Heath Town Council made no comment regarding the application

INTRODUCTION

The proposal is seeking retrospective planning permission for a garage conversion to internal habitable space.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The property is a two-storey detached house, located at the northeastern end of Bolnore Village in Haywards Heath. The property is set back from the highway, with driveway access to the garage on the side elevation of the property. The locality is characterised by houses of a similar style and design.

Externally the property is brick, set over two and a half storey with white UPVC windows.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The application seeks retrospective planning permission for a garage conversion into a habitable space. No external changes are proposed.

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 Haywards Heath 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.

Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan

The Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan was made on 15th December 2016

Relevant policies:

Policy E9 - 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:

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.

WSCC Guidance on Parking at New Developments - September 2020

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;

- Design and Character
- Impact on neighbouring properties
- Impact on Parking
- Biodiversity Net Gain

Design and Character

Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex 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;*
- protects valued townscapes and the separate identity and character of towns and villages;*
- 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 (see Policy DP27);*
- creates a pedestrian-friendly layout that is safe, well connected, legible and accessible;*
- incorporates well integrated parking that does not dominate the street environment, particularly where high density housing is proposed;*
- positively addresses sustainability considerations in the layout and the building design;*
- take the opportunity to encourage community interaction by creating layouts with a strong neighbourhood focus/centre; larger (300+ unit) schemes will also normally be expected to incorporate a mixed use element;*
- optimises the potential of the site to accommodate development.'*

Policy E9 of the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan states:

'Developers must demonstrate how their proposal will protect and reinforce the local character within the locality of the site. This will include having regard to the following design elements:

- height, scale, spacing, layout, orientation, design and materials of buildings,*
 - the scale, design and materials of the development (highways, footways, open space and landscape), and is sympathetic to the setting of any heritage asset,*
 - respects the natural contours of a site and protects and sensitively incorporates natural features such as trees, hedges and ponds within the site,*
 - creates safe, accessible and well-connected environments that meet the needs of users,*
 - Will not result in unacceptable levels of light, noise, air or water pollution,*
 - Makes best use of the site to accommodate development,*
 - Car parking is designed and located so that it fits in with the character of the proposed development.*
- Proposals affecting a listed building, conservation area, building of local interest or public park of historic interest or their setting should preserve or enhance their special interest and/or distinctive character.'*

A similar ethos is found within the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD.

The proposed garage conversion has not resulted in any external changes to the front elevation of the property. To the rear, a window has been added. Internal reconfiguration has taken place to allow access from the kitchen into the garage. It is therefore considered that there have been no impacts to the streetscene or character of the area due to the changes made.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with policy DP26 of the District Plan and policy E9 of the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan.

Impact on neighbouring properties

In terms of impact upon neighbouring amenities Policy DP26 in part seeks to ensure that 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 (see Policy DP29);'

It is not considered that the development has given rise to any significant impacts to the neighbours. No external changes have been made to the front and the additional window to the rear of the garage has not had any impact on neighbouring amenity. Therefore the proposal has not had any impact on privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and noise, air and light pollution.

In terms of neighbouring amenities, the proposal is therefore deemed to comply with policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and policy E9 of the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan.

Parking provision

Policy DP21 of the District Plan states that to meet the objectives of the West Sussex Transport Plan 2011- 2026, decisions on development proposals will take account of whether: *'the scheme provides adequate car parking for the proposed development taking into account the accessibility of the development, the type, mix and use of the development and the availability and opportunities for public transport; and with the relevant Neighbourhood Plan where applicable;.*

Condition 14 of the original planning permission for the development (ref: CD/029/96) states the following:

14. Building work shall not commence until details of the space to be laid out for parking and stationing vehicles clear of the public carriageway, including garages have been approved by the Local Planning Authority and no building shall be occupied until such space has been surfaced, drained and completed. The space so approved shall not thereafter be used other than for the parking of vehicles in connection with the development hereby permitted.

Reason: In the interests of road safety.

Therefore, the property does not benefit from permitted development rights to convert the garage.

West Sussex County Council Parking Standards Guidance (2020) outlines the County Council's approach to parking at new developments to ensure that sufficient parking is provided to meet the needs of the development while maintaining highway network operations, protecting surrounding communities and pursuing opportunities to encourage use of sustainable modes of transport.

It has been confirmed that the property currently has four bedrooms. West Sussex County Council Parking Standards Guidance (2020) outlines that for a 4-bedroom dwelling in this location that 2.7 parking spaces should be provided. As a result of the changes made, two external parking spaces on the driveway remain. Off street parking is available, therefore any displaced parking will not result in a highway safety problem.

It is therefore considered that, the proposal would be acceptable in terms of highways impact. Therefore, the proposal is deemed to comply with policy DP21 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and the WSCC Parking Standards Guidance.

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 appropriate in terms of design and will not negatively impact on the host dwelling nor its immediate setting and will not harm neighbouring amenities. Therefore, the proposal complies with

policies DP21 and DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, policy E9 of the Neighbourhood Plan and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF and is considered acceptable.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Tracie Axford