

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/25/1960	Case Officer:	Rachel Richardson
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	Proposed single-storey extension to annex, porch, and hidden flat roof with rooflight.		
Site:	Annexe, Wellhouse Farm, Wellhouse Lane, Burgess Hill, West Sussex, RH15 0BN, ,		
Validation Date	4 Aug 2025	Overall Expiry Date:	27 Aug 2025
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Refusal	Recommendation Date:	29 Sep 2025
Target Date:	29 Sep 2025	Recommending Officer Signature:	Rachel Richardson

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	1
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Signed and Agreed By:	Stephen Ashdown	Date:	29 Sep 2025
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/25/1960

**Annexe, Wellhouse Farm, Wellhouse Lane, Burgess Hill, West Sussex, RH15 0BN,
Proposed single-storey extension to annex, porch, and hidden flat roof with rooflight.
Mr And Mrs Carne**

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

A representation has been received from the National Annex Planning Consultancy in support of the application.

Their comments are summarised as follows:

- o Supports flexible and multigenerational living arrangements
- o The proposed extension is subservient to the existing annex which does not risk future separation from the main house

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

NatureSpace Partnership: Recommends an informative should planning permission be granted.

TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

Recommends permission be granted.

INTRODUCTION

Permission is sought for a single-storey extension to annex, porch, and hidden flat roof with rooflight.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

13/02258/FUL Retrospective permission is sought for the renovation and re-roofing of existing Old Dairy farm buildings to form ancillary living accommodation. Permission 29.08.2013

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The site consists of the annex, Wellhouse Farmhouse and other outbuildings.

The annex is a single storey timber clad building.

The site is located at the eastern end of a single lane private road and down a long driveway. Wellhouse farm is set within generous grounds the boundaries of which are defined by a post and rail fence and open countryside beyond to the north, a mature and well established hedgerow to the south, close boarded 2m high fence to the west and mature hedgerow to the rear along the eastern boundary. The site slopes downhill in an easterly direction from the west.

For the purposes of planning policy the site lies outside of the built up area boundary and within countryside. The South Downs National Park boundary is situated to the southern side of Wellhouse Lane.

APPLICATION DETAILS

This is a householder application for the annex, proposing a single storey extension, porch, gable dormer, and valley flat roof with rooflight.

The proposed extension would infill the rear north east corner (closest to the main dwelling). The proposed extension measures 5.9m deep by 9.9m wide and 3m high above ground level. It will have a flat roof with 3 rooflights. It is proposed to add a flint chimney on the eastern (rear) elevation. The proposed chimney would measure around 2m wide, and would project 0.8m from the rear elevation of the proposed extension. It would measure approximately 3.7m in height above ground level. The proposed extension will create a shared garden room.

It is proposed to add a centrally positioned pitched roof from the western wing over the rear eastern wing and a glazed two storey gable feature window on the eastern elevation. An extension (porch) to the front is also proposed. This measures 1.7m deep by 4.45m wide and 3.8m to the ridge height.

A flat roof is proposed between the two existing wings on the southern part of the annex building. This includes a rooflight.

Double doors to the south in the western wing would be removed and infilled with flint detailing either side of the existing brick piers. This is also proposed on the northern end of this wing. The fenestration to the eastern rear elevation will also be altered to reflect the internal changes and layout.

Proposed materials consist of composite weatherboarding, slate roof, rendered walls to the proposed rear extension and flint chimney and infill panels. Proposed windows and doors will be timber and the doors will have aluminium frames.

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 Hassocks 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:

DP12: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside
DP15: New Homes in the Countryside
DP18: Setting of the South Downs National Park
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

Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan made on 28th March 2018.

Policy 6: Development Proposals Affecting the South Downs National Park

Policy 9: Character and Design

Policy 14: Residential Development Within and Adjoining the Built-Up Area Boundary of Hassocks.

Relevant policies:

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 the 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:

DPB1: Character and Design

DPC1: Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside

DPC3: New Homes in the Countryside

DPC5: Setting of the South Downs National Park

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

The main issues for consideration are:

- o Principle, and
- o Design,

Principle

As noted above, planning legislation holds that the determination of a planning application shall be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

In terms of policy designations, the starting point for this assessment is that the application site falls outside of the built-up area of Hassocks as defined by the District Plan. As such the site is located within the defined Countryside.

Policy DP12 of the District Plan refers to the protection of the Countryside and states, in part, that development will be permitted in the countryside provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District, and is necessary for the purposes of agriculture or is supported by a specific policy reference either elsewhere in the Plan, a Development Plan Document or relevant Neighbourhood Plan.

Policy DP6 of the District Plan states in part that:

'Outside defined built-up area boundaries, the expansion of settlements will be supported where:

- 1. The site is allocated in the District Plan, a Neighbourhood Plan or subsequent Development Plan Document or where the proposed development is for fewer than 10 dwellings, and*
- 2. The site is contiguous with an existing built up area of the settlement, and*
- 3. The development is demonstrated to be sustainable, including by reference to the settlement hierarchy.'*

The proposal does not meet any of the above criteria.

Policy DP15 of the District Plan refers to new homes in the countryside and sets out the special justifications where new homes would be permitted. Special justification would include,

- Essential agricultural or forestry workers accommodation
- Exceptional design quality for isolated new homes
- Rural exception sites
- DP6 requirements being met

DP15 also states that:

'New 'granny annexes' that are physically separate to the dwelling are defined as a new home and are subject to the same requirements as above.'

The proposed residential development does not meet any of these special justifications.

However, application ref: 13/02258/FUL, granted retrospective planning permission for ancillary living accommodation. While the approved existing plans showed living accommodation without any kitchen facilities, this current application confirms (planning statement and existing drawings) that a kitchen has since been installed and that this would not have constituted development for which planning permission would have been required. The planning statement goes on to say that any internal re organisation of the living facilities would not amount to development provided the accommodation remains to be occupied for ancillary purposes to the main house at Wellhouse Farm.

13/02258/FUL has a condition which states:

' The accommodation hereby permitted shall be occupied solely for purposes incidental to the occupation and enjoyment of Wellhouse Farm as a dwelling and shall not be used as a separate unit of accommodation.

Reason: The proposal would otherwise be contrary to countryside policies which seek to restrict new housing in the countryside unless required to meet an agricultural need and to accord with Policy C1 of the Mid Sussex Local Plan.'

The current application proposes accommodation which is to be occupied by the parents of the applicants who reside at Wellhouse Farm. As such, the proposal is not considered to be tantamount to a new dwelling. The red line of the application site is drawn around the entirety of the existing unit for Wellhouse Farm and the garden area is shown to be shared with the main house and the annex. As such, the proposal is not in conflict with DP15.

Policy 14 of the HNP states inter alia that, 'Development proposals for residential development outside of the built- up area of Hassocks will be supported where they are in accordance with Policy DP6 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, Policy SD25 of the South Downs Local Plan and Policy 1 of this Plan.'

DP6 is considered to be a policy relating to the supply of housing and as such can be considered to be out-of-date, having regard to the NPPF tests. As such, this policy can be given limited weight in the determination of the application.

DP18 requires development that contributes to the setting of the SDNP only to be permitted where it does not detract from, or cause detriment to, the visual and special qualities (including dark skies), tranquillity and essential characteristics of the NP and should not adversely affect views, outlook and aspect, into and out of the NP by virtue of its location, scale, form or design.

Policy 6 of the HNP has a similar ethos to DP18 and also says that development proposals will be supported where they do not unacceptably harm the SDNP or its setting.

The building and its use currently exists, and the SDNP is some distance away and on the opposite side of Wellhouse Lane to the south. There is a large and much taller garage/workshop building situated between the annex and SDNP boundary which further screens the annex from the SDNP. As such, the proposal is not considered to detract from the essential characteristics of the SDNP.

In terms of the principle, and given the above there is compliance with Policy DP12, insofar as the development is deemed to maintain or enhance the quality of the rural and landscape character, the principle of the application does not conflict with the development plan, in terms of what type of development is allowable under Policies DP12, DP15 and DP18.

Design and Character

DP26 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 protects valued townscapes and the separate identity and character of towns and villages;*
- 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 (see Policy DP29);*
- o creates a pedestrian-friendly layout that is safe, well connected, legible and accessible;*
- o incorporates well integrated parking that does not dominate the street environment, particularly where high density housing is proposed;*
- o positively addresses sustainability considerations in the layout and the building design;*
- o 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;*
- o optimises the potential of the site to accommodate development.'*

Policy 9 of the HNP states:

'Development proposals will be supported where they have regard to the Hassocks Townscape Appraisal, and where their character and design takes account of the following design principles as appropriate to the nature, scale and location of the particular proposal:

- 1. Is of high quality design and layout;*
- 2. Contributes positively to the private and public realm to create a sense of place;*
- 3. Respects the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape;*
- 4. Protects open spaces and gardens that contribute to the character of the area;*
- 5. Protects valued townscapes and the separate identity and character of Hassocks, Keymer and Clayton;*

6. Does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings, including taking account of the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight, sunlight and security;
7. Creates safe, accessible and well connected environments;
8. Protects existing landscape features and contributes to the village's Green Infrastructure network;
9. Incorporates the use of local materials which are appropriate to the defined Local Townscape Character Area; and
10. Positively responds to the local vernacular character of the defined Local Townscape Character Area.'

MSDG principle DG49 states, inter alia 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.'

Extensions should typically use simple, uncomplicated building forms to complement and coordinate with the scale, form and massing of the original dwelling.'

'There are two general approaches to extending a property:

Designing in the style of the existing building by closely matching its facing materials, architectural features, window sizes and proportions; and

Designing in a contemporary style that takes its cues from key aspects of the existing building that might include its underlying form and proportions, facing materials, window design and other specific architectural features. The success of this approach is particularly reliant on high quality facing materials and finishes, and this will normally need to be demonstrated through detailed elevations and section drawings. '

In terms of design and character it is considered that the proposed development is contrary to the above policy criteria.

The character of the existing building is simple in terms of its form and materials. This is appropriate for its use as ancillary living accommodation. It is a single storey building with timber clad elevations. Given that it is an ancillary building and once incidental to the enjoyment of the main dwelling, it is of utilitarian appearance, designed to be useful or practical rather than attractive.

The proposed alterations to add a porch extension, rear extension of approximately 60sqm, two storey glass gable to the rear with enlarged roof, and feature flint chimney all seek to give this ancillary living accommodation greater domestic presence which are out of keeping with its existing character and ancillary use. The footprint of the resulting building now appears larger than that of the existing main house. Also, given its siting which is forward of the main house, it would no longer appear to be a building for ancillary purposes. The proposed alterations are considered to be out of keeping and detrimental to the building and would not respect the character and scale of the surrounding buildings in this rural setting.

As such, in design terms the proposed development conflicts with DP26, HNP Policy 9 and MSDGrache principle DG49 as well as national guidance contained in the provisions of the NPPF.

The proposed development is not considered to conflict with DP26 and HNP policy 9 in terms of residential amenity.

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 application is considered to be acceptable in principle for the reasons mentioned above. However, in terms of design it conflicts with relevant policies DP26 of the DP, HNP policy 9, DG49 of the MSDG and the NPPF. It is therefore recommended that permission be refused.

Decision: Refusal

Case Officer: Rachel Richardson