

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/26/1162	Case Officer:	Tracie Axford
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	A two storey side extension, set back from the existing front elevation. Single storey rear extension. New door to the rear external wall.		
Site:	5 Watermead, Balcombe, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 6EY, , ,		
Validation Date	13 May 2026	Overall Expiry Date:	30 Jul 2026
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	20 Aug 2026
Target Date:	8 Jul 2026	Recommending Officer Signature:	Tracie Axford

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	2
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Signed and Agreed By:	Stephen Ashdown	Date:	21 Aug 2026
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/26/1162

**5 Watermead, Balcombe, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 6EY, ,
A two storey side extension, set back from the existing front elevation. Single storey rear extension. New door to the rear external wall.
Mr And Mrs Kerr**

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

One representation letter was received in support of the application.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

Southern Water - The development site is not located within Southern Water's statutory area for water supply services, therefore they have no objections to the proposal.

Flood Risk and Drainage - No objection to the proposed development on flood risk grounds.

Tree Officer - Following the submission of Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan, the tree officer has no objections to the proposal provided that adherence to the Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan is conditioned.

Conservation Officer - the proposal is considered to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, meeting the requirements of District Plan Policy DP35 and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.

The following conditions were also recommended:

- Roofing and facing materials, including rainwater goods, to match existing adjacent work.
- Brickwork to match existing adjacent work in colour, texture and bonding pattern and colour, texture and style of pointing.
- Fenestration to match existing windows to the house in materials and finish, and in framing proportions and profile.
- Extension to patio in materials to match existing.

Naturespace - It is considered that the proposed development would present a low risk to great crested newts and/or their habitats. However, as the development is within the amber Impact Risk Zone, as modelled by district licence mapping, it is recommended that the following informative should be attached to planning consent:

"The applicant is reminded that, under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), it is an offence to (amongst other things): deliberately capture, disturb, injure, or kill great crested newts; damage or destroy a breeding or resting place; intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a resting or sheltering place. Planning permission for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this legislation. Should great crested newts be found at any stage of the development works, then all works should cease, and a professional and/or suitably qualified and experienced ecologist (or Natural England) should be contacted for advice on any special precautions before continuing, including the need for a licence."

Additionally, all vegetation within the works area shall be maintained at a maximum height of 30mm until construction is completed through regular mowing or grazing in order to discourage great crested newts from using the site. All works shall be carried out in accordance with the following measures:

- o Any demolition materials should be stored in skips or similar containers rather than in piles on ground

- o Any trenches left overnight should be covered or provided with ramps to prevent great crested newts from becoming trapped.
- o Any building materials such as bricks, stone etc. should be stored on pallets to discourage great crested newts from using them as shelter.

PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

Balcombe Parish Council - no objections

INTRODUCTION

The application seeks permission for a two storey side extension, set back from the existing front elevation. Single storey rear extension. New door to the rear external wall.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

5 Watermead is a two storey detached hipped roofed plain tiled dwelling within a modern cul-de-sac development off Jobes. The dwelling is characterised by face brickwork with timber doors and windows with a sloped rear garden.

To the south of the site is the driveway to the highway beyond, to the north of the site is the rear garden and beyond that a pond. To the west is the neighbour at No.3 and to the east of the site, is a line of trees separating the site from the rear gardens of properties on Stockcroft Road.

The site is within the built-up area of Balcombe and within the Balcombe Conservation Area and the High Weald AONB.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The application seeks permission for a two storey side extension, set back from the existing front elevation, a single storey rear extension and a new door to the rear external wall.

The extensions are proposed to be constructed of brickwork to match the existing brickwork, with hung tiling to the first floor, to match the existing dwelling.

The double storey extension is proposed to have a pitched roof, with roof tiles to match the existing roof. It will measure 7.5 metres in length and extend 3.3 metres beyond the existing side elevation. The roof will be lower than the existing roof and set back from the front elevation ensuring that it is subordinate to the existing dwelling.

The single storey extension is proposed to have flat roof with 2no. lantern rooflights. It will extend 3.5 metres beyond the rear wall of the existing dwelling, have a width of 7.3 metres and will have an overall height of 2.75 metres (excluding the roof light which will extend 0.65 metres above the flat roof). New windows are proposed to match the existing windows.

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 Balcombe 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:

DP16 - High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

DP26 - Character and Design

DP35 - Conservations Areas

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.

Balcombe Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan for Balcombe was made in September 2016. It is a material consideration with full weight in the determination of planning applications.

Relevant policy:

Policy 3 - 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 is currently at Examination with initial hearings held in February/March 2026. The Council is consulting on Main Modifications which are required to ensure the plan is legally compliant and sound. 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

DPB3 - Conservation Areas

DPC4 - High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

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) (August 2026)

The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2024-2029

ASSESSMENT

It is considered that the main issues that need to be considered in the determination of this application are as follows;

- Character and Design
- Impact on Neighbour Amenities
- Impact on Conservation Area
- Impact on the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Trees
- Biodiversity Net Gain

Character and Design

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 3 of the Balcombe Neighbourhood Plan which also relates to design states:

'The scale, density, massing, height, landscape design, layout and materials of all development proposals, including alterations to existing buildings, will be required to reflect the architectural and historic character and scale of the surrounding buildings and to avoid any significant detrimental effect on the landscape and natural beauty of the High Weald AONB and the significance and character or appearance of the Balcombe Conservation Area, where a building will command a view'

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.'*

Principle DG50 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide states in part that: *'Front and side extensions are typically visible from the public realm and will be resisted where they have an adverse impact on the street scene or the appearance of a dwelling.'* In relation to side extensions, it states *'Side extensions should normally be subservient to the original dwelling and typically be set-back from the front of the house to help define the original building. The gaps between dwellings can sometimes positively contribute to articulating (for example, through the consistent rhythm of repeated houses) and adding*

interest in a street frontage or by providing views / visible connections to the surrounding countryside. Side extensions will therefore need to appropriately respond to the character of the street form and will not normally be accepted where they close an important gap and view.

In terms of rear extensions, principle DG51 states: *'Rear extensions which are not visible from the street and do not negatively impact on neighbouring properties can be expressed in many forms, including by adopting a contemporary architectural approach. With reference to DG49, they should nevertheless have consideration for the character of the existing building and the relationship of the extension with the side boundaries and adjacent buildings and gardens'*

The proposed side and rear extensions will be subservient to the host dwelling. The side extension will be set back from the front elevation and will be lower in height than the roof of the existing dwelling, ensuring that it does not detract from the character of the original property. The side element of the extension will be visible from the public realm, however, its design, scale, and materials are considered to be in keeping with the character and appearance of the surrounding street scene. The application property is located at the end of a small cul-de-sac, with the proposal to be located on the side with no immediate neighbours. It is therefore considered that the development will not result in a visually intrusive or overbearing form.

Given the design, form and scale of the proposal in relation to the surrounding properties, and that it would be constructed in materials similar to those of the existing dwelling and the surrounding properties, the proposal is considered to comply with policy DP26 of the District Plan, policy 3 of the Balcombe Neighbourhood Plan and the relevant principles of the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD.

Impact on Neighbour amenities

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);'

New windows are to be introduced on the side elevation at ground floor level, however, they are not facing any neighbouring properties. A new door is proposed to the rear of the property close to the boundary with no.3, however as it will replace an existing window, it is not considered that there will be any increase in potential for overlooking.

Given the location of the proposed extensions, it is not considered that there will be any impact in terms of overshadowing or loss of daylight to the neighbouring amenities.

Given the domestic scale and nature of the proposed works, it is not anticipated that the development would give rise to any undue impacts in terms of noise, air quality, or light pollution. Accordingly, the proposal is considered to accord with Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, which seeks to protect the amenities of neighbouring occupiers.

Impact on Conservation Area

The application site is located within the Balcombe Conservation Area, which was established in August 1984 and extended in March 1990. Under Section 72 of the Listed Building and Conservation Area Act 1990 the Local Planning Authority is under duty to:

'...with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area....special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area'.

The District Plan contains Policy DP35, which requires development to conserve or enhance the special character and appearance of Conservation Areas. The Policy states:

'Development in a conservation area will be required to conserve or enhance its special character, appearance and the range of activities which contribute to it. This will be achieved by ensuring that:
- New buildings and extensions are sensitively designed to reflect the special characteristics of the area in terms of their scale, density, design and through the use of complementary materials;

- Open spaces, gardens, landscaping and boundary features that contribute to the special character of the area are protected. Any new landscaping or boundary features are designed to reflect that character;
- Traditional shop fronts that are a key feature of the conservation area are protected. Any alterations to shopfronts in a conservation area will only be permitted where they do not result in the loss of a traditional shopfront and the new design is sympathetic to the character of the existing building and street scene in which it is located;
- Existing buildings that contribute to the character of the conservation area are protected. Where demolition is permitted, the replacement buildings are of a design that reflects the special characteristics of the area;
- Activities such as markets, crafts or other activities which contribute to the special character and appearance of the conservation area are supported;
- New pavements, roads and other surfaces reflect the materials and scale of the existing streets and surfaces in the conservation area.'

The Conservation Officer was consulted on this application and the following comments were provided in response:

Subject to detail to be reserved by condition, the proposal is considered to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, meeting the requirements of District Plan Policy DP35 and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.'

It is therefore considered that it will not have an impact on the conservation area and complies with policy DP35 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.

Impact on the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The legal framework for AONBs, (also known as National Landscapes) in England and Wales is provided by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW) 2000 which at Section 82 reaffirms the primary purpose of AONBs: to conserve and enhance natural beauty. Section 84 of the CRoW requires Local Planning Authorities to *'take all such action as appears to them expedient for accomplishment of the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB'*. The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act (2023) amended section 85 of the CRoW Act, to create a new duty on relevant authorities to *'seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area' when discharging their functions in AONBs*.

A similar ethos is found within The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan which is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications in the AONB.

Policy 16 of the District Plan requires proposals in the AONB to conserve or enhance natural beauty. Paragraph 1, N4 of the NPPF states:

'Development proposals within Protected Landscapes should be limited in scale and extent and sensitively located and designed to avoid harm to the statutory purposes and special qualities of the Protected Landscape. Substantial weight should be placed on the importance of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of these areas, and to conserving and enhancing wildlife and cultural heritage in National Parks and the Broads.'

Paragraph 4, N4 of the NPPF states:

'Development proposals within the setting of Protected Landscapes should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the Protected Landscape'

The proposed extension is situated on the rear and side elevation of the dwelling and given the properties location in a private gated road will have limited visibility from the public domain. The design and character of the extension is considered acceptable and as such it would not have any adverse impact on the landscape quality of the AONB and the complies with the requirements of policy DP16 of the District Plan, High Weald AONB Management Plan 2024-2029 and paragraphs 1 and 4, N4 of the NPPF.

Trees

Policy DP37 of the Mid Sussex District Plan deals with Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows and states (in part), *'Trees, woodland and hedgerows will be protected and enhanced by ensuring development:*
o incorporates existing important trees, woodland and hedgerows into the design of new development and its landscape scheme; and
o prevents damage to root systems and takes account of expected future growth; and
o where possible, incorporates retained trees, woodland and hedgerows within public open space rather than private space to safeguard their long-term management; and
o has appropriate protection measures throughout the development process; and
o takes opportunities to plant new trees, woodland and hedgerows within the new development to enhance on-site green infrastructure and increase resilience to the effects of climate change; and
o does not sever ecological corridors created by these assets.

Proposals for works to trees will be considered taking into account:

o the condition and health of the trees; and
o the contribution of the trees to the character and visual amenity of the local area; and
o the amenity and nature conservation value of the trees; and
o the extent and impact of the works; and
o any replanting proposals.

The MSDC tree officer was consulted with regards to this application and stated that she had no objection but requested that a condition is added stating adherence to the AIA, AMS and Tree Protection Plan. Therefore, in terms of impact to trees, the proposal is deemed to comply with DP37 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.

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 scale and design of the extension is considered appropriate to the existing house and are considered to accord with District Plan Policy DP26, Balcombe Neighbourhood Plan Policy 3 and the Design Guide principles.

The proposed extension will preserve this part of the Balcombe Conservation Area. This accords with the aims of District Plan Policy DP35 and the aims of the NPPF with regards to preserving heritage assets. As the extension is sited to the rear and side of the property with limited views from the public domain, it would not impact local views in the High Weald AONB. Therefore it can be considered that this application accords with Policy DP16, DP26, and DP35 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, Policy 3 of the Balcombe Neighbourhood Plan and the relevant NPPF and AONB guidance and is recommended for approval.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Tracie Axford