

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/26/0421	Case Officer:	Andrew Watt
Application Type:	Full Application		
Proposal:	Single storey extension to the west elevation to enlarge the kitchen area		
Site:	Hassocks Football Club, The Beacon, Brighton Road, Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 9PF, ,		
Validation Date	19 Feb 2026	Overall Expiry Date:	13 Apr 2026
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	7 May 2026
Target Date:	16 Apr 2026	Recommending Officer Signature:	Andrew Watt

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	0
--	--	-------------------------------	---

Signed and Agreed By:	Steven King	Date:	8 May 2026
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/26/0421

**Hassocks Football Club, The Beacon, Brighton Road, Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 9PF,
Single storey extension to the west elevation to enlarge the kitchen area
Mr Patrick Harding**

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

None.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

MSDC Drainage Engineer

No objection.

Southern Water

No objection.

TOWN / PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

The committee reiterate previous comments and recommend permission is granted.

INTRODUCTION

Full planning permission is sought for a single-storey extension to the west elevation of the clubhouse to enlarge the kitchen area.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

In Feb 2004, planning permission was granted for a new clubhouse to replace existing clubhouse buildings (03/01870/FUL).

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The site consists of a clubhouse pavilion, which forms part of a football club consisting of a floodlit pitch and parking area, accessed off a driveway to the east of the A273 south of the Stonepound Crossroads. To the north is the South Downs Garden Centre; to the east are 2 telecommunications masts, set against a wooded backdrop, beyond which is the main London to Brighton Railway line; to the south is grassland; and to the south-west (sharing the same access) are South Downs Lodges holiday lets and dense woodland behind. Both woodlands are classified as ancient woodland.

The site is located within the countryside, and the South Downs National Park boundary is drawn tightly up against the eastern and western sides of the football pitch, with a strip of land to the south excluded, as with the pavilion and the car parking area. However, the access drive is located within the National Park, as is adjacent land to the west, south and east. Such land is designated as a Dark Sky Night Zone. The site is also designated as a Great Crested Newt - Impact Risk Zone (Red and Amber). Part of the access drive is at risk of surface water flooding.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The proposal is for a single-storey, flat roofed extension to the west of the main building, to enlarge the existing kitchen. Externally, it will measure approximately 2.8m in width by 3.8m in depth and 3.2m in

height. The extension will be finished in matching brickwork beneath a flat roof (approximately 5.1m in depth), of which part will overhang an external servery area, with a new UPVC servery window facing south.

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 Mid Sussex District Plan, Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) and the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan.

National policy (which is contained in the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Practice Guidance) does not form part of the development plan, but is an important material consideration.

Mid Sussex District Plan (Mar 2018)

The Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 was adopted at Full Council on 28 March 2018.

Relevant policies:

Policy DP12: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside
Policy DP18: Setting of the South Downs National Park
Policy DP25: Community Facilities and Local Services
Policy DP26: Character and Design
Policy DP38: Biodiversity
Policy DP41: Flood Risk and Drainage

Site Allocations DPD

The SADPD was adopted on 29 June 2022. It allocates sufficient housing and employment land to meet identified needs to 2031.

There are no relevant policies.

Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan (Jul 2020)

Mid Sussex District Council formally 'made' the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan part of the Local Development Plan for the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan area as of 24 June 2020. The policies contained therein carry full weight as part of the Development Plan for planning decisions within the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan area.

Relevant policies:

Policy 4: Managing Surface Water
Policy 6: Development Proposals Affecting the South Downs National Park
Policy 9: Character And Design

Other Legislation

Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000

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 19 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:

DPS4: Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage
DPS6: Health and Wellbeing
DPN1: Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Nature Recovery
DPN2: Biodiversity Net Gain
DPC1: Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside
DPC5: Setting of the South Downs National Park
DPB1: Character and Design
DPI6: Community and Cultural Facilities and Local Services

Mid Sussex Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (Nov 2020)

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 4 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.

Relevant design principles include:

Principle DG11: Respond to the existing townscape, heritage assets and historic landscape
Principle DG37: Deliver high quality buildings that minimise their environmental impact
Principle DG38: Design buildings with architectural integrity and a sense of place

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Dec 2024)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 is a material consideration and paragraphs 8 (overarching objectives), 11 (presumption in favour of sustainable development), 12 (status of development plan), 39 (decision-making), 48 (determining applications), 96 (achieving healthy, inclusive and safe places and beautiful buildings), 98 (social, recreational and cultural facilities and services), 131 and 135 (design), 166, 167 and 168 (sustainability), 181, 182 (flood risk), 187 (conserving and enhancing the natural environment), 189 (National Parks and National Landscapes) and 193 (biodiversity and ancient woodland) are considered to be relevant to this application.

National Planning Practice Guidance

National Design Guide

Published in 2021, the National Design Guide illustrates how the government considers well-designed places that are beautiful, healthy, greener, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice.

Paragraph 134 of the NPPF sets out that this national document, along with the National Model Design Code, should be used to guide decisions on application in the absence of locally design guides or design codes.

ASSESSMENT

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.

Policy DP12 of the Mid Sussex District Plan states (in part):

'The countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty. Development will be permitted in the countryside, defined as the area outside of built-up area boundaries on the Policies Map, provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District, and:

- *it is necessary for the purposes of agriculture; or*
- *it is supported by a specific policy reference either elsewhere in the Plan, a Development Plan Document or relevant Neighbourhood Plan.'*

The application site is located in designated countryside for which no special justification of the proposal exists and is therefore considered contrary to the first criterion of this policy. However, Policy DP25 of the Mid Sussex District Plan is relevant, which refers specifically to sports pavilions and states (in part):

'The provision or improvement of community facilities and local services that contribute to creating sustainable communities will be supported.'

The supporting Planning Statement advises that 'the proposal seeks to enlarge the existing kitchen to enhance the operational capacity of this established community sports facility', and to 'improve service provision for players, visitors and community events'. Accordingly, the principle of development is considered acceptable in accordance with these policies.

Design and impact on the character and appearance of the area

Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan states (in part):

'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;*
- *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;*
- *positively addresses sustainability considerations in the layout and the building design.'*

Policy 9 of the Neighbourhood Plan states (in part):

'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;*
- 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;'

It is considered that the modest scale and design of the extension would be subservient to the main clubhouse building. Although at the front of the building, it is set back from the main Brighton Road by a considerable distance, and hence the proposal would meet the above policies and the Design Guide SPD.

Impact on the setting of the South Downs National Park

The site is located within the setting of the South Downs National Park.

Policy DP18 of the Mid Sussex District Plan aims to avoid significantly harming the setting of the National Park, as does Policy 6 of the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan.

Paragraph 189 of the NPPF states that:

'Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.'

As above, it is considered that the modest nature and matching materials of the proposed extension would not have an adverse impact on the setting of the South Downs National Park, and therefore the proposal would comply with the above policies and guidance.

Impact on neighbouring amenity

Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan seeks to ensure that development does not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants.

Although the Mid Sussex District Plan seeks to ensure that development does not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings, the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure that development does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants. As this is the later development plan document to be adopted, the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan takes precedence.

It is not considered that any neighbouring residential properties would be affected by this extension.

Accordingly, the scheme would comply with Policy 9 of the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan.

Flood Risk and Drainage

Policy DP41 of the Mid Sussex District Plan aims to ensure that developments are adequately drained and not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

Policy 4 of the Neighbourhood Plan states:

'Technical proposals which seek to reduce the risk of surface water flooding will be supported. Development proposals should seek to reduce existing run-off rates in the first instance.'

'Development proposals which incorporate sustainable drainage techniques to manage surface water will be supported. Where technically feasible sustainable drainage techniques should include infiltration measures that reflect natural drainage patterns and manage water as close to its source as possible.'

The Council's Drainage Engineer has raised no objection the development on flood risk or drainage grounds, and hence the proposal would comply with Policy DP41 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. Under the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain this application comprises development below the de-minimis threshold (approx. 10.6 sq m of additional floorspace, below that of 25 sq m), meaning that this development is exempt from providing biodiversity net gain.

Other matters

The site is located within a designated Great Crested Newt - Impact Risk Zone (Red and Amber). However, having regard to the nature of the application, it is unlikely to have an impact on newts and accordingly there would be no conflict with biodiversity legislation, policy and guidance.

PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

The application is deemed to be acceptable in principle, enhancing an existing community facility, and is of an appropriate scale and design in relation to the existing clubhouse building, with no harm to the landscape character of this rural location or setting of the South Downs National Park. It would not cause any significant detriment to surrounding residents. There would be no harm to biodiversity. Accordingly it is considered that the proposed development would comply with Policies DP12, DP18, DP25, DP26, DP38 and DP41 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, Policies 4, 6 and 9 of the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan, the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD and the NPPF and is therefore considered acceptable.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Andrew Watt