

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/26/0799	Case Officer:	Andrew Horrell
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	Loft conversion with gable-end and rear dormer.		
Site:	85 Grand Avenue, Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 8DG, , , ,		
Validation Date	27 Mar 2026	Overall Expiry Date:	1 May 2026
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	12 May 2026
Target Date:	22 May 2026	Recommending Officer Signature:	Andrew Horrell

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	0
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Signed and Agreed By:	Steven King	Date:	12 May 2026
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/26/0799

**85 Grand Avenue, Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 8DG, , ,
Loft conversion with gable-end and rear dormer.
Ms Helen Smith**

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

None received

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

None

HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

The committee recommend permission is granted.

INTRODUCTION

The application seeks planning permission for a loft conversion with gable-end and rear dormer.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

85 Grand Avenue is a two-storey semi-detached dwelling. The walls are a mix of pebbledash and face brickwork with timber and upvc doors and upvc windows with front bay windows.

To the north of the site is the rear garden with close boarded fencing to Bromley Close beyond, to the west of the site is the set back No.83, to the east is the adjoining No.87 and to the south of the site is the driveway to the highway beyond.

In policy terms the site is within the built-up area of Hassocks.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The proposed hip to gable enlargement approximately measures 4.8m in width using the existing eaves and ridge heights. Two front rooflights are proposed which approximately measure 1.2m by 1m.

The proposed flat roofed rear dormer approximately measures 3.5m in depth, 6.3m in width with a height of 2.6m. This will serve a bedroom, office and bathroom

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, the Site Allocations Development Plan Document and the 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 in 2018. The most relevant policy is:

DP21 - Transport
DP26 - Character and Design
DP39 - Sustainable Design and Construction

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.

Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan is made so forms part of the development plan. The most relevant policies are:

Policy 5: Enabling zero carbon
Policy 9: Character and 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:

DPS2 - Sustainable Design and Construction
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.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024)

The National Planning Policy Framework is a material consideration. Paragraphs 8, 131 and 135 are considered to be particularly relevant to this application.

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;
- Sustainable Design;
- Parking Standards;
- Impact on neighbouring residential amenity; and
- 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 9 of the Neighbourhood Plan is a similar criteria based policy and states that:

'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'.

The Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD also provides advice for extensions to dwellings. Principle DG49 states 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'.

Principle DG52 refers specifically to roof extensions and states:

'A loft conversion is a space efficient means of extending the amount of living accommodation in a dwelling. Roof accommodation is normally reliant on dormer windows and rooflights to provide light and ventilation. However, if they are out of scale or out of character with the roofscape and proportions of a dwelling they can have an adverse impact on the character of both the dwelling and the streetscape.

The roof pitch and form are intrinsic to a building's character and roof extensions should be sensitive to this. Roof extensions and dormer windows that alter the existing ridge of the roof or significantly alter the roof profile of a building will not normally be acceptable, particularly on the front roof slope, and where there is a strong established roofline.

Where a clear rhythm of fenestration is established, the position and proportion of dormer windows should respond to existing windows and / or doors. Further guidance on dormer windows and rooflights is provided in chapter 6 under sections 6.3.5 to 6.3.8'.

The streetscene is characterised by pitched roofed dwellings, so the hip to gable roof extension would not be out of character. A number of dormers are visible with the streetscene, including a number of similar large rear flat roofed rear dormers constructed under permitted development at neighbouring properties including No.93 (DM/19/1329).

The proposed dormer is of a size that according to the submitted planning statement would mean that it would be 4 cubic metres above the limit outlined within the permitted development criteria.

Whilst the size and style of the dormer is against principle DG52 of the Design Guide, it will be constructed of materials that are similar in appearance to those used in the existing dwelling and as noted above will not be out of character with the streetscene which is characterised by dormers including those of similar design. The proposed front rooflights will be modest and will be constructed of external materials similar in appearance to those used in the existing dwelling.

Therefore, proposed dormer and rooflights comply with policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, Policy 9 of the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan and requirements of the NPPF.

Sustainable design

District Plan Policy DP39 states:

'All development proposals must seek to improve the sustainability of development and should where appropriate and feasible according to the type and size of development and location, incorporate the following measures:

- o Minimise energy use through the design and layout of the scheme including through the use of natural lighting and ventilation;*
- o Explore opportunities for efficient energy supply through the use of communal heating networks where viable and feasible;*
- o Use renewable sources of energy;*
- o Maximise efficient use of resources, including minimising waste and maximising recycling/ re-use of materials through both construction and occupation;*

- o *Limit water use to 110 litres/person/day in accordance with Policy DP42: Water infrastructure and the Water Environment;*
- o *Demonstrate how the risks associated with future climate change have been planned for as part of the layout of the scheme and design of its buildings to ensure its longer term resilience'*

Policy 5 of the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan states:

'Development proposals will be supported that maximise the opportunity to include sustainable design features, providing any adverse local impacts can be made acceptable'.

The proposed roof extension would be constructed in materials to match the existing dwelling. A renewable energy source has not been included within the proposal nor any other energy saving measures, however the development would need to meet building regulation standards and it is not considered that this would warrant the refusal of the proposal.

Parking Standards

As a new bedroom is proposed, the parking standards should be assessed. It has been confirmed that the existing dwelling has 3 bedrooms. Therefore, with the creation of a new bedroom in the converted loft, it has been confirmed that the dwelling will become a 4-bedroom dwelling.

Policy DP21 of the District Plan seeks to ensure that schemes are sustainably located to minimise the need for travel, and protect the safety of road users and pedestrians, and seeks to provide adequate parking in relation to development proposals.

WSCC Guidance on Parking at New Developments states that in this location, for a 4-bedroom dwelling, that 2.7 parking spaces has to be provided. The current driveway serves 3 cars. Coupled with this there are limited parking restrictions on the street and the site is within walking distance of the village centre with alternative modes of transport (buses and trains) available. Therefore, the proposed development will be acceptable in terms of parking standards.

Consequently, the proposal is considered acceptable on highway safety and parking standards grounds, and complies with policy DP21 of the District Plan and the requirements of the NPPF.

Impact on residential amenity

In residential amenity terms, the test of development from Policy DP26 of the District Plan is whether or not it causes 'significant harm' to neighbouring amenity. Policy 9 of the Neighbourhood Plan however refers to development not causing '*unacceptable harm*' to residents.

In residential amenity terms, the test of development here is whether or not it causes '*unacceptable harm*' to neighbouring amenity as per Policy 9. Under section 38(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, if a policy contained in a development plan for an area conflicts with another policy in the development plan, the conflict must be resolved in favour of the policy which is contained in the last document to be adopted, approved or published. The '*unacceptable harm*' test of the Neighbourhood Plan adopted in 2020 is therefore the correct test to apply in this case.

The proposed dormer window does not have any direct views into neighbouring properties. The proposed enlargement to the roof is not considered to have an impact in terms of reduction in sunlight and daylight and a loss of outlook because of its positioning and nature. Whilst a level of overlooking will be caused toward neighbouring gardens, this is to be expected within the built-up area and the level of harm would be no more unacceptable than existing first floor rear facing windows.

As such the proposal would not cause a significant detrimental impact in terms of overlooking and loss of privacy, reduction in sunlight and daylight, a loss of outlook and noise, air and light pollution.

It is therefore, considered to comply with the above-mentioned part of policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and policy 9 of the Hassocks Neighbourhood 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.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the proposal is acceptable in respect of its design and the impact on neighbouring residential amenity insofar as unacceptable harm cannot be demonstrated with sufficient parking provision. As such the proposal accords with the requirements of Policies DP21, DP26 and DP39 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, Policies 5 and 9 of the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan, the Mid Sussex Design Guide and the NPPF.

The application therefore accords with the development plan and there are no material planning considerations which indicate an alternative conclusion should be reached.

Planning permission should therefore be granted.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Andrew Horrell