

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/26/0406	Case Officer:	Tracie Axford
Application Type:	Full Application		
Proposal:	Replacement of existing front and side double-glazed timber framed casement windows with new double-glazed timber framed casement windows with glazing bars to match existing styles. Replacement of existing rear double-glazed timber framed casement windows with new double-glazed UPVC framed casement windows with glazing bars to match existing styles. Replacement of existing double-glazed timber framed rear doors with new double-glazed UPVC framed rear doors with glazing bars to match existing styles. (Amended Description and Amended Plans rcvd 01.04.2026)		
Site:	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 And 9 Hett Close, Ardingly, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 6TE, , ,		
Validation Date	17 Feb 2026	Overall Expiry Date:	23 Apr 2026
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	23 Apr 2026
Target Date:	14 Apr 2026	Recommending Officer Signature:	Tracie Axford

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	5
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Signed and Agreed By:	Steven King	Date:	24 Apr 2026
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/26/0406

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SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

5 letters were received relating to design and the resulting impact on light to the dwellings and the use of uPVC

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

Conservation Officer - *"The application properties are modestly sized modern houses located within the Ardingly Conservation Area- the houses form part, but not all of, two adjacent terraces which are a part of a development granted planning permission in 1999. The development occupies part of the former grounds of Hapstead House, a large probably mid-19th century building, now converted to flats, which is located just to the south. Hapstead House is one of the oldest and certainly the largest buildings in this eastern part of the Conservation Area, and has some landmark value, being a focal point in views from the High Street along the original entrance driveway (now Hett Close). A small number of other historic buildings which were part of the Hapstead House estate also survive- the Lodge House adjacent to the High Street, and the former coach house to the north of the main building, now a residential conversion. These historic buildings have group value, and make individually and collectively a strong positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.*

The late 20th century development of which the application properties are part is in close proximity to the historic house and coach house, and will have resulted in loss of part the original gardens. It is however relatively sympathetic in design and materials to the original buildings, which to an extent mitigates the harm to the setting of the historic buildings and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area arising from these factors. For example, timber has been used for the windows and rear doors to the buildings, although the front doors are suggested to be of composite/uPVC construction.

The current proposal is for the replacement of the existing timber windows to the front and rear with uPVC framed casements and the rear timber framed glazed doors with uPVC units. In my opinion, the proposal is unacceptable in principle, as the use of this material is not sympathetic to the Conservation Area or to the context of the nearby historic buildings at Hapstead House and the former coach house. It would detract from the quality and consistency of the development at Hett Close, particularly as not all of the buildings to both terraces are included in the application, and from the contribution which this makes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. I would recommend that the proposal is amended to indicate replacement double glazed timber framed windows and doors of an appropriate design.

As it stands, I would consider the proposal harmful to the character and appearance of the Ardingly Conservation Area, contrary to the requirements of District Plan Policy DP35. In terms of the NPPF, I would consider the harm caused to be less than substantial, at the low-mid point of that scale, such that paragraph 215 will apply.'

ARDINGLY PARISH COUNCIL

No comments received

INTRODUCTION

Planning permission is sought for the following at 1,2,4,5,6,7,8 and 9 Hett Close:

- Replacement of existing front and side double-glazed timber framed casement windows with new double-glazed timber framed casement windows with glazing bars to match existing styles.
- Replacement of existing rear double-glazed timber framed casement windows with new double-glazed uPVC framed casement windows with glazing bars to match existing styles.
- Replacement of existing double-glazed timber framed rear doors with new double-glazed uPVC framed rear doors with glazing bars to match existing styles.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

DM/25/3210 - Replacement of existing double glazed timber framed casement windows with double-glazed uPVC casements windows. Replacement of double-glazed timber framed communal doors with new double-glazed composite uPVC doors. Amended Plans received 25.02.2026 to show substitution of uPVC replacement windows and doors to double glazed timber framed windows and doors, and replacement of two existing rear rooflights with new double glazed timber framed rooflights. Permitted March 2026

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application site is a small, cul-de-sac located within the Ardingly Conservation Area including ten houses, eight of which are the subject of this application and an apartment block which was granted planning permission in the late 1990s, in part of the former grounds of Hapstead House, which lies to the south of the site and dates from the mid-C19th. Hapstead House is one of the oldest and certainly the largest buildings in this eastern part of the Conservation Area, and has been converted to flats. It has some landmark value, being a focal point in views from the High Street along the original entrance driveway (now Hett Close). A small number of other historic buildings which were part of the Hapstead House estate also survive: the Lodge House adjacent to the High Street, and the former coach house to the north of the main building, now a residential conversion. These historic buildings have group value, and make individually and collectively a strong positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Nos 1,2,4,5,6,7,8 and 9 Hett Close lie in close proximity to the historic house and coach house, and is set within part the original gardens. The dwellings are relatively sympathetic in design and materials to the original buildings and have existing timber windows and composite uPVC front doors.

The site lies outside the built up area of Ardingly, within the designated Conservation Area and within the High Weald National Landscape (former Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty- AONB) and the Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

APPLICATION DETAILS

The application seeks planning permission for the replacement of the windows and doors of the properties. As originally proposed the replacement windows and doors were to be uPVC casement windows and uPVC doors.

During the course of the determination, the plans have been amended to include double glazed timber framed windows and doors, to the front of the properties to avoid harm to the conservation area. uPVC windows and doors are proposed to the rear of the properties where they are not visible from the public domain.

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 Ardingly 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 on 28th March 2018. The relevant policies are:

DP12 - Protection and Enhancement of Countryside

DP16 - High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

DP26 - Character and Design

DP35 - Conservation 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.

Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan

The relevant policies are:

ARD 5: Housing Design

ARD 9: Heritage Assets

Other Legislation

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

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:

DPS1 - Climate Change

DPS2 - Sustainable Design and Construction

DPB1 - Character and Design

DPB2 - Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets

DPC4 - High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024)

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;

- Design and Character
- Impact upon the AONB
- Impact upon the Conservation Area
- Impact on neighbouring amenities
- Biodiversity Net Gain

Design and Character

Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan relates to character and design and 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.'

Also relevant is Policy ARD5 of the Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan, which refers to design and states: *'The Neighbourhood Plan requires all developments, including alterations to existing buildings, to be sympathetic of the character and scale of surrounding buildings and landscape'.*

The site is located outside the built up boundary of Ardingly, within the open countryside.

The relevant District Plan Policy is DP12.

Policy DP12 seeks to maintain and enhance the quality and character of the rural area, whilst protecting the countryside in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty.

The proposed changes to the fenestration at Nos 1,2,4,5,6,7,8 and 9 Hett Close will not be out of keeping to the design of the original development and will not encroach on public views and its rural setting. The use of uPVC will only be used on the rear of the dwellings which are not visible from the public domain.

Consequently the design and appearance of the proposed alterations are considered to accord with Policies DP12 and DP26, Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan Policy ARD5 and with the relevant Design Guide principles.

Impact upon the High Weald AONB

The proposed development is located within the High Weald National Landscape (AONB), where District Plan Policy DP16 is also relevant. This states that development will only be permitted where it conserves or enhances natural beauty and has regard to the High Weald AONB Management Plan.

Also relevant in the determination of the application is Paragraphs 189 of the NPPF, which state: *'189. 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.'*

A similar ethos is found within The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan.

The proposed changes to the windows and doors at Nos 1,2,4,5,6,7,8 and 9 Hett Close will not impinge on local views. The alterations will not impinge upon the wider character of the area. Consequently this application accords with Policy DP16 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and the relevant NPPF and AONB guidance.

Impact upon Conservation Area

Nos 1,2,4,5,6,7,8 and 9 Hett Close are located within the Ardingly (East) Conservation Area, which was established in April 1984, and extended in March 1990.

This application needs to be considered with reference to guidance on Proposals affecting Heritage assets contained in Chapter 16 of the NPPF, re: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment. The relevant NPPF guidance the local planning authorities should consider in determining proposals affecting heritage assets is contained in Paragraph 210, which states:

'210. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a. the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- b. the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- c. the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.'*

It is the statutory duty of the Council, as the Local Planning Authority, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the character or appearance of the Ardingly Conservation Area, as set out in Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The District Plan contains Policy DP35, which requires development to conserve or enhance the special character and appearance of Conservation Areas. The Policy requires that existing buildings that contribute to the character of the conservation area are protected.

Neighbourhood Plan Policy ARD 9 also *'requires development proposals affecting a listed building or conservation area or their setting to conserve or enhance the special quality and distinctive character of Ardingly.'*

Following the comments from the conservation officer relating to the use of uPVC, the plans were changed to include the use of timber framed casement windows on the front elevations of the properties. It is considered that the use of the amended timber design for the replacement windows and doors is appropriate and will not appear out of keeping with the character and appearance of the properties within the Conservation Area, thereby preserving the area.

The proposed alterations are considered acceptable as they meet the requirements of District Plan Policy DP35, the aims of Policy ARD 9 of the Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan and the relevant guidance contained in the NPPF.

Whilst some concerns were raised regarding the use of timber frames rather than uPVC, it is considered that properly installed and maintained timber frames would be appropriate and there are no grounds for a blanket resistance to such a material.

Impact on residential amenities

In assessing the potential impact of the proposed conversion works upon the neighbouring amenities consideration needs to be given to District Plan Policy DP26.

Policy DP26 requires that *'All applicants will be required to demonstrate that development does not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of the new dwellings.'*

In addition Principle DG45 in the Design Guide refers to the need to consider privacy of existing and future residents and it is noted that privacy may be affected by the relationship of buildings to each other.

It is considered that the proposed changes at Nos 1,2,4,5,6,7,8 and 9 Hett Close will not negatively impact upon the appearance of the dwellings and will not impact upon the outlook or amenities of the neighbouring residents living opposite the site. Given that the proposal involves replacement windows and doors only, it will not result in any alteration to the built form and therefore will not give rise to any loss of daylight or sunlight to neighbouring dwellings. Comments in the representation letter relating to

concerns over loss of light refer to the original plans where half glazed doors were proposed. The latest plans show that the rear doors will be uPVC framed doors with glazing bars to match existing styles, therefore there will be no resulting impact on light.

Accordingly, the scheme would comply with Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and the relevant Design Guide principles on 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. Under the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain this application comprises development below the de-minimis threshold meaning that this development is exempt from providing biodiversity net gain.

PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

Planning legislation requires that the application be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The proposal has been assessed against the policies of the Mid Sussex District Plan, the Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan, and relevant national guidance contained within the NPPF.

Following amendments to the scheme to provide timber framed windows and doors to the front elevations, the proposal is considered to preserve the character and appearance of the Ardingly Conservation Area. The use of uPVC to rear elevations, which are not visible from the public realm, would not result in harm to heritage significance.

The proposal would not adversely affect the character or appearance of the High Weald National Landscape and would not result in harm to residential amenity.

Overall, the proposal is considered to comply with Policies DP12, DP16, DP26, DP34 and DP35 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, Policies ARD5 and ARD9 of the Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan, and the relevant provisions of the NPPF. Planning permission is therefore recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Tracie Axford