

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/25/3243	Case Officer:	Stefan Galyas
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	Single storey front porch, side extension, rear extension. Hip to gable loft conversion with rear dormer and rooflights to front elevation. Amendment to existing dropped kerb.		
Site:	38 Backwoods Lane, Lindfield, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 2EN, , ,		
Validation Date	23 Dec 2025	Overall Expiry Date:	23 Feb 2026
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	24 Feb 2026
Target Date:	17 Feb 2026	Recommending Officer Signature:	<i>Stefan Galyas</i>

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	1
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Signed and Agreed By:	<i>Steven King</i>	Date:	24 Feb 2026
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/25/3243

**38 Backwoods Lane, Lindfield, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 2EN, ,
Single storey front porch, side extension, rear extension. Hip to gable loft conversion with rear
dormer and rooflights to front elevation. Amendment to existing dropped kerb.
Mr James Flint**

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

There was one letter of representation received in response to the original development proposal. It sought to object to the proposal, noting that the new windows for the loft conversion impacting neighbouring privacy.

The scheme was subsequently revised to reduce the size of the dormer and to change the front extensions roof from a hip to a gable design. One further letter of representation was received which noted that concerns regarding neighbouring privacy remained.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

West Sussex County Council Highways: *'The LHA does not consider that this proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 116), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.'*

Southern Water: No objection.

TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

Parish Council: *'The Parish Council has no objections to this application but would ask if the officer is minded to approve they consider the installation of obscured glass to the first floor windows.'*

INTRODUCTION

The application seeks planning permission for the development of a single storey front, side and rear extension. The proposal would also change the existing roof from a hip to a gable with a rear dormer. Rooflights would be added to the front roof pitch and the existing dropped kerb would be enlarged.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

DM/22/1268 - 43 Backwoods Lane, Lindfield, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 2EL - Proposed loft conversion into habitable space. The existing roof is to be extended to a gable end with a flat roof dormer to the rear pitch. Permission 05.07.2022.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application relates to 38 Backwoods Lane, a semi-detached two storey dwelling which features a hipped roof. The property is positioned to the north-western side of the highway and is set back from the roadside edge by a paved front driveway which slopes upwards towards the dwelling. There is further front garden amenity space set between the dwelling and the roadside as well as rear garden amenity space. In terms of materials, the existing dwelling is composed of brickwork at ground floor and render at first floor to the walls, a tiled roof and white uPVC windows.

With regard to the street scene, there are several semi-detached residential dwellings which display some variance in external materials, with some dwellings featuring brickwork exteriors while others utilise render.

In terms of policy constraints, the site is located within the Haywards Heath and Lindfield built up area boundary. The site is also located within a defined area of townscape character in the Lindfield and Lindfield Rural Neighbourhood Plan.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The application seeks planning permission for the development of a single storey front, side and rear extension.

The proposed single storey front extension would measure at approximately 1.5m in length, 5m wide, 2.7m high to the eaves and 4.2m high to the ridge.

The proposed side extension would measure at circa 7.6m in length when measured flush with the principal and rear elevations, 2.1m wide, 3m high to the eaves and 3.8m to the highest point of the roof slope when measured from the highest natural ground floor level.

To the rear, the proposed extension would measure at circa 4.4m in maximum length, 9.8m wide, 2.8m high to the eaves and 4.2m high to the ridge to the gable element and 3.2m high to the flat roof element.

The proposed extensions would be composed of rendered walls, a tiled roof and a mix of white, light green/ neutral tone and black windows and doors.

A new dormer would be developed to the rear roof slope and would measure at circa 3.2m in length, 7.1m wide and 2.2m high. The proposed rear dormer would be constructed of tile hanging to the exterior walls, a dark grey flat roof membrane and white framed windows.

Additionally, two new front rooflights would be added whilst the existing dropped kerb to the roadside would be enlarged.

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 Lindfield and Lindfield Rural 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:

DP21: Transport

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

Lindfield and Lindfield Rural Neighbourhood Plan (Made March 2016)
None applicable.

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 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:

DPS1 - Climate Change

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 (NPPF) 2024 is a material consideration. Paragraphs 2, 8, 11, 39, 48, 115-117, 131, 135 & 139.

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 on Neighbouring Amenities
- Impact on Highways and Parking
- Biodiversity Net Gain

Design and Character

Policy DP26 of the 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:

- 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 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'

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.'

Additionally, Principle DG50 as set out within the Design Guide, relates to front extensions:

'Front extensions are more likely to be acceptable where the building line is staggered or where the dwelling is set well back from the road. They are less likely to be acceptable in streets with a strong consistent building form as they risk disrupting the underlying order.'

Principle DG50 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide elaborates further on what constitutes 'good design' in relation to side extensions:

'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'

With regard to loft conversions and roof extensions, Principle DG52 notes that:

'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.'

Section 6, Paragraph 6.3.6 states:

'Dormer windows should be visually subordinate to the roof slope, enabling a large proportion of the main roof to remain visible. Excessively wide dormers are likely to look unsatisfactory as they will often be out of proportion with the existing roof.'

Whilst the design guide advises against dormers which would significantly alter the roofs profile in Principle DG52 and Section 6, Paragraph 6.3.6, the sites local context also forms a material consideration in the proposals assessment. It is considered that there are a number of other properties along Backwoods Lane which have previously been extended at loft level through the addition of rear dormers. Most recently, permission was granted for a rear dormer directly across the road from the application site at No.43 under DM/22/1268. It is therefore considered that whilst the proposed dormer

would be contrary to the design guide, that the dormer would not appear overly incongruous given the presence of other rear dormers within the locality.

In terms of the proposed hip to gable alteration, it is considered that this would likely appear slightly uncomfortable provided the adjoining semis use of a hipped roof form. However, a similar example of alternative roof forms in a pair of semis is visible within the site's vicinity, for example at Nos. 43 and 41 Backwoods Lane whereby No.43 utilises a pitched roof whilst 41 displays a gable. Therefore, the proposed alteration is considered to be acceptable on balance.

The proposed single storey front, side and rear extension would wrap around the dwelling but would be limited to a limited single storey height. Furthermore, the use of render to the exterior walls is considered to reflect the existing dwellings palette of materials and therefore would likely assimilate well with the existing. The extensions would likely appear subservient to the existing dwelling and are not considered to be overly dominant in size, scale and massing.

To the rear, the proposed extensions would utilise a large amount of glazing throughout and would give rise to a more contemporary appearance. It is considered that this feature would not be significantly visible from the street scene and be set within a visually discrete position in terms of public views.

Two front rooflights would be added to the principal roof pitch of the original dwelling. Whilst this would introduce a new feature to the site itself, it is considered that a number of visually prevalent rooflights are visible throughout the streetscene. Accordingly, this element of the development is considered to be acceptable.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policy DP26 of the District Plan and the relevant principles of the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD.

Impact on Neighbouring 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 DP29);'*

The proposed dormer would include two rear elevation windows which would serve as a principal window to a primary habitable room (bedroom) as well as a secondary window to the landing. These windows would be located some circa 20m away from the neighbouring property to the north at No.1 Beckworth Lane. There are a number of side elevation windows at the aforementioned neighbouring property which are visible from the application site. However, the neighbouring dwelling is angled so that the side elevation faces towards a more south-easterly direction. Furthermore, the separation distance of approximately 20m is considered to be sufficient to overcome a significant overlooking impact.

In terms of the proposed rear extension, this would project further to the north-west than the adjacent neighbouring single storey extension at No.36. There is a rear elevation window at No.36 within a close proximity to the shared boundary which serves as a primary window to a non-habitable study room. It is considered that the proposed extension would be of a limited single storey height and would be offset from the shared boundary by circa 0.6m. As such, it is not considered that the proposal would result in a significant overbearing or overshadowing impact in this regard.

Three new rooflights would be added to the side (north-western) roof slope of the side and rear extension as well as two further rooflights to the south-eastern roof of the rear extension. It is considered that these rooflights would be used more so for light than to provide outlook and would be set at a high level which would prevent direct outlook for the dwelling's occupants. As such, it is not considered that there would be a significantly adverse overlooking impact.

Accordingly, the proposal is considered to comply with the provisions of DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan in terms of neighbouring amenities.

Impact on Highways and Parking

Paragraph 116 of the NPPF states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. Additionally, Policy DP21 of the District Plan requires development proposals to protect the safety of road users and pedestrians.

The proposal would increase the quantum of bedrooms at the property from three to four. Whilst a study has been shown on the ground floor plans with what appears to be an illustrative bed, it is not considered that this room would qualify as a full-time bedroom. The increase in bedrooms would also require the provision of an additional allocated parking space as per the West Sussex County Council Revised Guidance for Parking Provision. Two parking spaces have been shown on the proposed floor plans and therefore the proposal would generate an additional overspill of one parking space. As the immediate vicinity around Backwoods Lane is not subject to any parking restrictions i.e. yellow lines, it is considered that this overspill parking space could sufficiently be accommodated as roadside parking. No further concerns were raised by West Sussex County Council (WSCC) Highways in terms of highway safety. It is not considered that this reason would be tantamount to a refusal of the application on this basis.

A widened dropped kerb is proposed as part of the development which would be widened by circa 3m. No further concerns were raised from WSCC Highways in terms of safety but noted that the works would be subject to a license from the Area Engineer.

As such, the proposal is considered to meet the provisions of DP21 of the 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

In conclusion, the proposal is appropriate in terms of design and will not negatively impact on the host dwelling nor its immediate setting, will not harm neighbouring amenities and result in an acceptable highways impact.

The proposal will comply with Policies DP21 and DP26 of the District Plan, the Lindfield and Lindfield Rural Neighbourhood Plan, the MSDC Design Guide and the requirements of the NPPF.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Stefan Galyas