

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/25/2581	Case Officer:	Tracie Axford
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	Conversion of existing detached single garage into habitable accommodation.		
Site:	63 Stonepound Road, Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 8PR, , , ,		
Validation Date	15 Oct 2025	Overall Expiry Date:	25 Dec 2025
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	7 Jan 2026
Target Date:	10 Dec 2025	Recommending Officer Signature:	<i>Tracie Axford</i>

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	0
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Signed and Agreed By:	<i>Steven King</i>	Date:	7 Jan 2026
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/25/2581

**63 Stonepound Road, Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 8PR, , ,
Conversion of existing detached single garage into habitable accommodation.
Mrs Y Caruso**

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

None

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

None

HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

Recommend approval is granted

INTRODUCTION

This application seeks planning permission to convert the existing detached single garage into habitable accommodation.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application relates to 63 Stonepound Road, a two-storey semi-detached property with a hipped roof. The dwelling is positioned to the western side of the road and is set back from the pavement edge by a front garden, with a parking space for 1 vehicle and a low brick-built boundary wall from the pavement edge.

The dwelling is set within a linear plot, with garden amenity space contained to the rear where a single storey pitched roofed garage is positioned. This is accessed by a shared driveway with 65 Stonepound Road. The site backs onto London Road further to the west and is screened by mature tree planting. The existing dwelling is composed of brick exterior walls, painted white at first floor level, red clay roof tiles and white framed uPVC windows and doors.

There are primarily semi-detached dwellings sited to the western side of the road which follow the curve of the road at varying setbacks. Properties tend to feature external render at first floor level with a number of dwellings having been previously extended to both the principal and rear elevations.

The site is within the built-up area for Hassocks as defined in the District Plan (DP).

APPLICATION DETAILS

This application seeks planning permission to convert the existing detached single garage into habitable accommodation. The door leading to the garden on the north elevation of the building will be replaced by a full length window. The existing window will be enlarged and another new window will be added.

On the eastern elevation, which faces the driveway, the existing garage doors will be replaced by a window and a door with brick infill to match the existing. The windows on the south and west elevations will be replaced by brick infill to match the existing.

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 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 at Full Council on 28th March 2018.

Relevant policies:

DP21 Transport

DP26 Character and Design

DP34 Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets

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 was made on the 24th June 2020 and forms part of the development plan.

Relevant policies:

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 the 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)

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 properties
- Impact on Parking
- Sustainability
- Other Matters
- Biodiversity Net Gain

Impact on design and character

Policy DP26 of the District Plan relates to character and design and states in part that:

'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;*
- 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);*
- incorporates well integrated parking that does not dominate the street environment, particularly where high density housing is proposed;'*

Policy 9 of the Neighbourhood Plan 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 proposal consists of minor changes to the fenestration of the existing outbuilding including some brick infill. It is proposed that the materials used will match the existing building. The changes to the outbuilding will have limited visibility from the public domain so there will be no harm to the streetscene.

The proposal is therefore considered to accord with policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, Policy 9 of the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan and complied with the design principles DG49 and DG51 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide.

Impact on Neighbouring Properties

Policy DP26 of the District Plan refers to amenity and states that development proposals should *'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'.*

Policy 9 of the Neighbourhood Plan states that development proposals should *'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.'*

In cases where there is a discrepancy between District and Neighbourhood Plan policies, legislation states that that greater weight should be given to the Plan (and policy) that has been adopted at a later date. In this instance the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan was made in June 2020 and the Mid Sussex District Plan adopted in March 2018. As such, it is considered that greater weight should be given to the Neighbourhood Plan policy 9, with the test being whether the proposal would result in unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenities.

The outbuilding is set in the rear garden, separate from the main dwelling and is not close to the neighbouring dwellings. The change to the existing outbuilding will have no impact on the neighbouring properties as the building will remain the same in terms of its size and height. It is also considered that the changes to the existing fenestration, will not result in an increase in overlooking.

The proposal is therefore considered to accord with policy 9 of the Neighbourhood Plan and policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.

Impact on Parking

Policy DP21 of the District Plan states that to meet the objectives of the West Sussex Transport Plan 2011- 2026, decisions on development proposals will take account of whether: i'the scheme provides adequate car parking for the proposed development taking into account the accessibility of the development, the type, mix and use of the development and the availability and opportunities for public transport; and with the relevant Neighbourhood Plan where applicable;.

Parking in the vicinity is mainly on-street, although many have converted the front gardens into driveways, including 63 Stonepound Road which has one parking space to the front of the property.

The West Sussex County Council Parking Standards Guidance (2020) states that: - If garages are provided they should be at least 6m x 3m internally. *'If garages meet this requirement, they will be regarded as an allocated parking space of 0.5 and calculations of parking demand will take this into account.'*

The garage which is the subject of this application is smaller than this at 5.8m x 2.74m and therefore does not meet the standards guidance. It could therefore be considered that the conversion of this garage will not result in a loss of parking space.

The proposal is therefore considered to accord with policy DP21 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.

Sustainability

Policy 5 of the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan states the following, *'Development proposals will be supported that maximise the opportunity to include sustainable design features, providing any adverse impacts can be made acceptable. Residential development proposals that modify existing buildings (including extensions) should seek to maximise the inclusion of energy saving measures and renewable energy generation among other matters, requires domestic extensions to maximise the inclusion of energy-saving measures and renewable energy generation.'*

Whilst no particular energy saving measures have been outlined within the submitted proposed plans, it is considered that this matter can be dealt with at the building regulations stage. The absence of further information on this matter is not considered to warrant a refusal of the application on this basis.

Other Matters

Mid Sussex District Plan Policy DP34 relates to listed buildings and other heritage assets including archaeological. The application property is located within an Archaeological Notification Area for a Roman Road that runs through the area. It is considered that due to the type and scale of the proposal it is unlikely to have an adverse impact on the heritage asset.

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 proposed development is considered acceptable in terms of design and it is also considered that the proposal should not have an impact on the neighbouring properties nor parking. The proposal therefore accords with policies DP21, DP26 and DP34 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and policies 5 and 9 of the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Tracie Axford