

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/25/1177	Case Officer:	Catherine Cardin
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	Proposed loft conversion.		
Site:	16 Ash Grove, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 4PZ, , , ,		
Validation Date	3 Jul 2025	Overall Expiry Date:	30 May 2025
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Refuse	Recommendation Date:	8 Jul 2025
Target Date:	28 Aug 2025	Recommending Officer Signature:	<i>Catherine Cardin</i>

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	1
--	--	-------------------------------	---

Signed and Agreed By:	<i>Steven King</i>	Date:	8 Jul 2025
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/25/1177

**16 Ash Grove, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 4PZ, , ,
Proposed loft conversion.
Mr And Mrs Parker**

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

One letter of representation was received. This raised concerns regarding:

- The loss of privacy to neighbouring properties
- Whether the design would be in keeping with the character of the area

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

None received.

TOWN COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

No comment.

INTRODUCTION

The application seeks planning permission for a proposed loft conversion featuring a box dormer to the rear elevation and the insertion of 3 no. rooflights to the front roof pitch. The roof would also be altered from a hip to a gable pitch as part of the proposed works.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

04/01507/FUL- Single storey rear extension. Permission.

DM/17/2555- Two storey side extension with extension of hipped roof over and a single storey rear extension (Amended plans received 4 October 2017).

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application relates to 16 Ash Grove, a semi-detached two-storey dwelling featuring a hipped roof and front gable end presenting to the roadside. The existing dwelling is constructed of red facing brickwork walls with clay tile hanging at first floor level, a plain tile roof and white upvc windows. The property is set back from the roadside by a brick paved driveway. The property has previously been extended through a two-storey addition to the side (southern) elevation and a single-storey addition to the rear elevation. The property benefits from garden amenity space to the rear.

The sites locality displays a number of estate style dwellings of a traditional appearance located within a cul de sac. There is some visual variance contributed towards the street scene through a variety of bungalows, semi-detached dwellings and detached dwellings. Some properties are set back from the highway by front driveways and grass verges. Several dwellings appear to have been extended and modified to the side, front and rear elevations.

With regard to policy constraints, the site is located within the built-up area of Haywards Heath. Neighbouring properties are located to the north, south and west. The highway is located to the east.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The proposed development would alter the existing hipped roof into a gable end to the side (southern) elevation. The roof extension would measure some 3.7 metres in width and some 4 metres in depth. This would have a maximum height of some 3 metres. Furthermore, a box dormer would be constructed on the properties rear (western) elevation, while three rooflights would be added to the dwellings front (eastern) elevation. The proposed rear dormer would measure some 6.1 metres in width and some 2.7 metres in depth. This would have a flat roof with a maximum height of some 2.1 metres. The proposed exterior materials would 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 Haywards Heath 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:

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

Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan made in 2016.

Relevant policies:

Policy E9 - Design

Policy H9 - Residential Extensions

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

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
- Neighbouring Amenities
- Biodiversity Net Gain

Design and Character

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

- 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 protects valued townscapes and the separate identity and character of towns and villages;*
- 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 (see Policy DP27);*
- o creates a pedestrian-friendly layout that is safe, well connected, legible and accessible;*
- o incorporates well integrated parking that does not dominate the street environment, particularly where high density housing is proposed;*
- o positively addresses sustainability considerations in the layout and the building design;*
- o 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;*
- o optimises the potential of the site to accommodate development.'*

Policy E9 of the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan relates to design and states that:

'Developers must demonstrate how their proposal will protect and reinforce the local character within the locality of the site. This will include having regard to the following design elements:

- o height, scale, spacing, layout, orientation, design and materials of buildings,*
- o the scale, design and materials of the development (highways, footways, open space and landscape), and is sympathetic to the setting of any heritage asset,*

- o respects the natural contours of a site and protects and sensitively incorporates natural features such as trees, hedges and ponds within the site,*
- o creates safe, accessible and well-connected environments that meet the needs of users,*
- o Will not result in unacceptable levels of light, noise, air or water pollution,*
- o Makes best use of the site to accommodate development,*
- o Car parking is designed and located so that it fits in with the character of the proposed development.*

Proposals affecting a listed building, conservation area, building of local interest or public park of historic interest or their setting should preserve or enhance their special interest and/or distinctive character.'

Policy H9 of the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan relates to extensions and states that:
'Extensions to existing dwellings will be permitted where it meets the following criteria:

- o The scale, height and form fit unobtrusively with the existing building and the character of the street scene.*
- o Spacing between buildings would respect the character of the street scene.*
- o Gaps which provide views out to surrounding countryside are maintained.*
- o Materials are compatible with the materials of the existing building.*
- o The traditional boundary treatment of an area is retained and, where feasible reinforced.*
- o The privacy, daylight, sunlight and outlook of adjoining residents are safeguarded.'*

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.'

The Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD also provides advice for loft conversions and roof extensions. Principle DG52 states 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.'

The National Design Guide (2021) states in Paragraph 44 that:

'to communicate the benefits of a scheme, it is important to explain how the design of a development relates to context and local character.' It adds that

"well-designed places and buildings are influenced positively by:

- o The history and heritage of the site, its surroundings and the wider area, including cultural influences;*
- o The significance and setting of heritage assets and any other specific features that merit conserving and enhancing;*
- o The local vernacular, including historical building typologies such as the terrace, town house, mews, villa or mansion block, the treatment of facades, characteristic materials and details.'*

(Paragraph 46).

Whilst the existing property has previously been extended to the side (southern) elevation through the addition of a two-storey extension, it is considered that the original dwellings hipped roof pitch is still largely in place. The proposed rear dormer would measure at some 6.1m in width and would be of a boxed appearance. The proposed size of the box dormer is not considered to be visually subordinate to

the existing roof slope and would appear excessively wide. It is therefore considered that the proposal would significantly alter the existing roof profile. Accordingly, the proposal would be a clear contravention of Principle DG52 of the Design Guide. Furthermore, it is not considered that the design of the rear dormer has responded to the local character of the area. One example of a similar dormer extension can be found at no.18 Ash Grove, but as this was completed using 'permitted development rights' this can only be afforded limited weight in this assessment. It is therefore considered that the proposal would be harmful to the character of the area.

In relation to the proposed hip to gable alteration to the side (southern) elevation, the proposal would raise the existing height to accommodate this alteration to this end of the dwelling. It is considered that this alteration would also significantly change the dwellings existing roof pitch which would appear unbalanced in relation to the adjoining semi-detached property. The existing hipped roof arrangement is considered to provide a balancing feature to the dwelling. In light of this, the proposal would not comply with the provisions of DG52 of the Design Guide.

In light of the above, the proposed external alterations to accommodate the loft conversion both through the hip to gable conversion and the rear box dormer, would not sympathetically alter the existing roof pitch, thus leading to an unbalancing effect. Furthermore, the rear dormer would not appear visually subordinate to the existing roof pitch and would significantly alter the roof profile. Accordingly, the proposal would conflict with the provisions of policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, Policy H9 of the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan and Paragraph 135 of the NPPF.

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 hip to gable alteration would increase the size and scale of the built form towards the side (southern) boundary with No.15. An existing separation distance of some 5.5 metres would remain between the development and the neighbouring property. It is considered that the proposed gable end and increased height would not significantly increase the overbearing impact when compared to the current arrangement. No windows are proposed on the side (southern) elevation so it is not considered that the proposal would give rise to any significant overlooking concerns.

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

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 proposed boxed rear dormer is considered to significantly alter the existing roof profile, appearing excessively wide and therefore un-subordinate to the existing roof arrangement. Further significant changes to the existing roof would come through the form of the hip to gable conversion which is considered to unbalance the appearance of the pair of semidetached properties. As such, it is considered that the proposal would fail to comply with the provisions of policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, Policy H9 of the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan, Principle DG52 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide and Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Decision: Refuse

Case Officer: Catherine Cardin