

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/25/2620	Case Officer:	Peter Davies
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	Garage conversion into habitable space, new front window and new roof.		
Site:	19 Austen Close, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 1RZ, , , ,		
Validation Date	23 Oct 2025	Overall Expiry Date:	19 Nov 2025
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	11 Dec 2025
Target Date:	18 Dec 2025	Recommending Officer Signature:	<i>Peter Davies</i>

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	0
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Signed and Agreed By:	<i>Stephen Ashdown</i>	Date:	12 Dec 2025
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/25/2620

**19 Austen Close, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 1RZ, , ,
Garage conversion into habitable space, new front window and new roof.
Mr C Searle**

REPRESENTATION RECEIVED

None received.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

Drainage

The FRA confirms that the site lies within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore at very low risk of fluvial flooding. The Risk of Flooding from Surface Water mapping suggests the site is shown to be at low surface water flood risk (comparable to flood zone 2) for the present day.

The proposed development fits within EA Standing Advice. We have no objection to the proposed development on flood risk grounds. This is subject to the proposed development incorporating all flood mitigation and resilience measures set out within the Flood Risk Assessment, including finished floor levels.

Drainage should be managed via Building Regulations and Building Control, as necessary.

TOWN COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

No comment

INTRODUCTION

The application seeks planning permission to convert the garage into a habitable space.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

No relevant history.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application property is a detached two storey dwelling located at the end of the cul-de-sac Austen Close, within the built up area of East Grinstead.

The property has a pitched roof and is constructed from brick with hanging tile at first floor level, interlocking roof tiles and white uPVC fenestration. The dwelling is set back from the highway with off street parking and a garage linked to no. 17 to the north. The locality is characterised by two storey dwellings of a similar design, form and scale. To the south of the application property runs a footpath with fields beyond.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The application seeks planning permission to convert the attached garage into a habitable room. The rear section of the garage had already been converted with the front of the garage to be bricked up and a window installed on the front elevation. The lean to roof is to be added to the front with a height of 1.15 metres and a depth of 1.85 metres. The rest of the roof is to remain a flat roof.

The materials used are to match the existing dwelling.

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 East Grinstead 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
DP41 - Flood Risk and Drainage

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.

East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan (made November 2016)

Relevant policies:

EG3 - Promoting Good Design
EG12 - Car Parking

Other Material Considerations

Mid Sussex District Plan 2021-2039 Consultation Draft

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:

DPS4 - Flood Risk and Drainage
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)

Paragraphs 8, 11, 131 and 135 are considered to be relevant.

National Planning Policy Guidance

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 provision
- Flood Risk and Drainage
- 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.'*

East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan policy EG3 states:

'Planning permission will normally be granted where development proposals meet the following criteria:

- o *The form of the proposed development is proportionate and in keeping with the scale, height, materials and site coverage of the surrounding area;*
- o *The layout of the proposed development respects the topography and character of the site, protects important landscape features and does not harm adjoining amenity;*
- o *The proposal does not result in the loss of buildings or spaces that would have an unacceptable impact on the character of the area;*
- o *The proposal ensures satisfactory means of access for vehicles and pedestrians and provides adequate parking, cycle storage and refuse facilities on site;*
- o *The design of new buildings and the layout of spaces, including footways, car and cycle parking areas, should be permeable and provide connectivity with neighbouring areas;*
- o *New development must be inclusive and where appropriate make satisfactory provision for the safe and easy access for those with mobility impairment; and*
- o *The design of new developments must result in the creation of a safe and secure environment and incorporate adequate security measures and features to deter crime, fear of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour; and*
- o *Proposals make provision for green infrastructure and biodiversity enhancement'.*

A similar ethos is found within the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD.

The proposed garage conversion will only result in a replacement of the garage door with a brick wall and a window and the roof added to the front to match the appearance of the lean to roof over the porch. The works will use materials to match the existing dwelling and are of an acceptable design. A garage conversion has been previously approved as part of an extension at no 13 Austen Close in application DM/20/0902.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with policy DP26 of the District Plan and policy EG3 of the East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan.

Impact on neighbouring properties

Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 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 Policy DP29);*'

Policy EG3 of the East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan states that proposals should "not harm" adjoining neighbours amenity whereas policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan states that development 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. There is therefore some conflict between the District Plan and Neighbourhood Plan in this respect. 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. As such, policy DP26 is considered to take precedence and therefore the test in this instance is whether the development causes significant harm to neighbouring amenities as outlined above.

The proposed alterations would be located at ground floor level to the front of the property and would result in additional overlooking to the street scene. The garage roof would be increased in height at the front however joins onto the garage of no. 17 Austen Close and will therefore not create an impact on loss of light to neighbour amenities.

Therefore, the proposal is not considered to cause significant harm to neighbouring amenities and complies with the above-mentioned part of Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and policy EG3 of the East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan.

Impact on parking provision

Policy DP21 in part states:

'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;'

Policy EG12 of the East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan is also considered to be relevant and states:

'Planning permission will only be granted where vehicle-parking provision, including cycle parking, is in accordance with West Sussex County Council adopted parking standards and it does not dominate the street scene.'

'In exceptional circumstances, a departure from the adopted standards will be supported if the applicant can demonstrate specific local circumstances require a different level of parking provision, including as a result of the development site's accessibility to public transport, shops and services, highway safety concerns and local on-street parking problems. For this to be accepted a Transport Assessment will be required together with a set of proposals to justify this alternative provision'.

West Sussex County Council September 2020 Parking Standards Guidance, outlines that for a 3 bed dwelling in parking behaviour zone 4, 1.7 spaces should be provided. The dwelling has parking for 2 cars on the drive and as the garage has already been partially converted no space in the garage.

The 2 spaces on the drive would be retained and therefore there would be no loss of parking to the dwelling. The property is therefore considered to provide sufficient parking space that meets the parking requirements set out within the WSCC Guidance. The proposal is therefore, considered to comply with Policy DP21 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and EG12 of the East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan

Flood Risk and Drainage

Policy DP41 in part states:

'Particular attention will be paid to those areas of the District that have experienced flooding in the past and proposals for development should seek to reduce the risk of flooding by achieving a reduction from existing run-off rates.'

Our mapping system shows the site to be located within flood zone 1 with the risk of surface water flooding being low which is the equivalent of flood zone 2.

The drainage consultants had no objection with any drainage matters managed via building regulations.

Therefore, the proposal is considered to be in line with policy DP41 of the Mid Sussex 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 considered to be appropriate in terms of design, size and scale to the dwellinghouse and locality, would not cause significant harm the amenities of neighbouring properties, will not increase flood risk and has sufficient parking provision. Therefore, the proposal complies with Mid Sussex District Plan policies DP21, DP26 and DP41, policies EG3 and EG12 of the East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan and with the relevant provisions of the NPPF. The application therefore accords with the Development Plan and is considered acceptable.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Peter Davies