

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/26/0215	Case Officer:	Tracie Axford
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	13 Ground mounted solar panels in rear garden		
Site:	The Old Ride, High Hatch Lane, Hurstpierpoint, Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 9LH, ,		
Validation Date	28 Jan 2026	Overall Expiry Date:	23 Feb 2026
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	19 Mar 2026
Target Date:	25 Mar 2026	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:	19 Mar 2026
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/26/0215

**The Old Ride, High Hatch Lane, Hurstpierpoint, Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 9LH,
13 Ground mounted solar panels in rear garden
Mr Martin Kyndt**

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

None

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

None

PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council recommend MSDC grant permission.

INTRODUCTION

The application seeks planning permission for 13 no. ground mounted solar panels in rear garden.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

There is no relevant planning history for this site.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application site consists of a large two storey detached dwelling located off the eastern side of High Hatch Lane, within the countryside. The locality is characterised by loose knit sporadic development with large areas of woodland and open fields, with the existing development in the area largely consisting of residential and agricultural properties. The application property is located within a group of residential properties located solely off the eastern side of the highway. The properties are of individual designs and characters with some of the properties obscured from public view. As the highway extends to the south the ground level increases significantly, resulting in a staggered appearance along the highway.

The application dwelling is positioned close to the highway with a front boundary wall and mature hedging, which largely obscures the ground floor from public view. The driveway extends around the northern side of the dwelling to the rear which includes the main entrance to the dwelling. To the southern side of the property is an extended private drive to Oaklands Park Farm, with the application property benefiting from an additional gated entrance off the drive to the rear of the dwelling.

The dwellinghouse has a pitched gable roof with a number of existing front and rear gable and dormer projections, and is constructed in brick, hanging tiles, plain roof tiles and white upvc fenestration.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The application seeks planning permission for 13 no. ground mounted solar panels in rear garden. The proposed solar panels would be sited within an enclosed rear section of the garden. The 13 individual panels will each measure 1.95 metres x 1.13 metres x 3cm in depth and will be placed in a continuous row. The panel surfaces will comprise 3.2mm black tempered glass and their frames will comprise black anodized aluminium.

The solar panels will be ground mounted on black anodized aluminium frames that will be held in place by spikes in the ground. At their tallest point the panels will project 1.4 metres above ground level. The associated electricity cable will run a metre inside the boundary hedge, just below ground level. (The turf will be dug up and replaced once the cable is in place).

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 Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common 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:

DP12 - Protection and Enhancement of Countryside

DP26 - Character and Design

DP40 - Renewable Energy Schemes

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.

Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan (made March 2015)

Relevant Policy:

HurstC1 Conserving and Enhancing Character

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:

DPS2 - Sustainable Design and Construction

DPS3 - Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Schemes

DPC1 - Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside

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;

- Principle of Development
- Design and Character
- Impact on neighbouring properties
- Biodiversity Net Gain

Principle of Development

Policy DP12 of the Mid Sussex District Plan states (in part):

'The countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty. Development will be permitted in the countryside, defined as the area outside of built-up area boundaries on the Policies Map, provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District, and:

- it is necessary for the purposes of agriculture; or*
- it is supported by a specific policy reference either elsewhere in the Plan, a Development Plan Document or relevant Neighbourhood Plan.'*

Policy DP40 of the Mid Sussex District Plan relates to renewable energy and states:

'Proposals for new renewable and low carbon energy projects (other than wind energy development - see below), including community-led schemes, will be permitted provided that any adverse local impacts can be made acceptable, with particular regard to:

- Landscape and visual impacts, including cumulative impacts, such as on the setting of the South Downs National Park and High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and the appearance of existing buildings;*
- Ecology and biodiversity, including protected species, and designated and non-designated wildlife sites;*
- Residential amenity including visual intrusion, air, dust, noise, odour, traffic generation, recreation and access.*

Assessment of impacts will need to be based on the best available evidence, including landscape capacity studies. Proposals for wind energy development involving one or more wind turbines will only be granted if:

- the development site is in an area identified as suitable for wind energy development in a Neighbourhood Plan; and*
- following consultation, it can be demonstrated that the planning impacts identified by affected local communities have been fully addressed and therefore the proposal has their backing.'*

Policy HurstC1 of the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan states 'Development, including formal sports and recreation areas, will be permitted in the countryside, where:

- It comprises an appropriate countryside use;*
- It maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the Parish area;*
- In the South Downs National Park, policy HurstC2 will take precedent.*

The solar panel system would generate renewable energy for The Old Ride. The proposal would be modest in size, not visible from the public domain and therefore in keeping with the rural location. It is therefore considered that the principle of the proposal would meet the requirements of policies DP12 and DP40 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and is acceptable.

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."*

It is considered that the chosen siting of the solar panels is appropriate in the respect that these will be within the existing garden curtilage of the dwelling, yet at a reasonable distance from the dwelling, so as not to detract from the design and character of the dwelling. The amount of ground coverage is also only modest. The panels would be fully screened from the road by the dwelling and hedges.

It is therefore considered that the proposed works would not have a harmful impact on the character of the dwelling nor the character of the street scene and is considered to comply with policy DP26 of the District Plan.

Impact on neighbouring properties

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 Policy DP29);'*

Given the nature of the proposed development, its position and distance from neighbouring properties, it is considered that there would not be an adverse impact on neighbouring amenity.

Therefore, as there will be no significant harm to neighbour amenities the proposal complies with DP26 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 and would not cause significant harm to the amenities of neighbouring properties. Therefore, the proposal complies with Mid Sussex District Plan policies DP12, DP26 and DP40 and policy HurstC1 of the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan and the relevant provisions of the NPPF. The application therefore accords with the Development Plan and is considered acceptable.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Tracie Axford