

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/25/3210	Case Officer:	Anna Tidey
Application Type:	Full Application		
Proposal:	Replacement of existing double glazed timber framed casement windows with double-glazed uPVC casements windows. Replacement of double-glazed timber framed communal doors with new double-glazed composite uPVC doors. Amended Plans received 25.02.2026 to show substitution of UPVC replacement windows and doors to double glazed timber framed windows and doors, and replacement of two existing rear rooflights with new double glazed timber framed rooflights.		
Site:	11 - 14 Hett Close, Ardingly, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 6TE, , ,		
Validation Date	16 Dec 2025	Overall Expiry Date:	25 Mar 2026
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	27 Mar 2026
Target Date:	10 Feb 2026	Recommending Officer Signature:	Anna Tidey

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	0
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Signed and Agreed By:	Stephen Ashdown	Date:	27 Mar 2026
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/25/3210

**11 - 14 Hett Close, Ardingly, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 6TE, ,
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SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

None received.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

Conservation Officer: The original proposal is for the replacement of the existing timber windows with uPVC framed casements and the timber doors with composite units. In my opinion, the proposal is unacceptable in principle, as the use of these materials is not sympathetic to the Conservation Area or to the context of the adjacent historic buildings at Hapstead House and the former coach house. It would detract from the quality and consistency of the development at Hett Close, and from the contribution which this makes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. I would recommend that the proposal is amended to indicate replacement double glazed timber framed windows and doors of an appropriate design. In regards of the windows, any amended proposal should also omit the prominent trickle vents shown on the submitted proposed drawings.

As it stands, I would consider the proposal harmful to the character and appearance of the Ardingly Conservation Area, contrary to the requirements of District Plan Policy DP35. In terms of the NPPF, I would consider the harm caused to be less than substantial, at the low-mid point of that scale, such that paragraph 215 will apply.

Further comments: The proposal has been revised to show replacement double glazed timber framed windows and composite timber ply faced doors. The DAS has also been revised to acknowledge that the building is within the Conservation Area. This is welcomed, subject to further, site specific detail which could be required by condition.

The proposal is therefore considered to preserve the character and appearance of the Ardingly Conservation Area, meeting the requirements of District Plan Policy DP35.

I recommend a condition to require detailed elevational and sectional drawings, at an appropriate large scale, annotated to show materials and finishes, of typical examples of new windows and doors, with glazing bar details.

Further comments: Sufficient details have been provided to avoid the need for conditions.

PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

Ardingly Parish Council: None received.

INTRODUCTION

Planning permission is sought for the replacement of the existing double glazed timber framed casement windows and the double glazed timber framed doors communal doors serving Nos 11-14 Hett Close.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

DM/26/0406. Replacement of existing front and rear double glazed timber framed casement windows with new front and rear double- glazed uPVC framed casement windows with glazing bars to match existing styles. Replacement of existing side double- glazed timber framed casement windows with new double glazed uPVC framed casement windows. Replacement of existing double-glazed timber framed rear doors with new double-glazed uPVC framed rear doors with solid panel to lower section and glazing bars to match existing style to upper section. Yet to be determined.

AR/037/94. 4 No. x 1 bedroomed flats 10 No. x 3 bedroomed houses. Approved September 1998.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application site is a small, modern apartment block located within the Ardingly Conservation Area. The block was built within a larger development including ten houses which was granted planning permission in the late 1990s, in part of the former grounds of Hapstead House, which lies to the south of the site and dates from the mid-C19th. Hapstead House is one of the oldest and certainly the largest buildings in this eastern part of the Conservation Area, and has been converted to flats. It has some landmark value, being a focal point in views from the High Street along the original entrance driveway (now Hett Close). A small number of other historic buildings which were part of the Hapstead House estate also survive: the Lodge House adjacent to the High Street, and the former coach house to the north of the main building, now a residential conversion. These historic buildings have group value, and make individually and collectively a strong positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Nos 11-14 Hett Close lie in close proximity to the historic house and coach house, and is set within part the original gardens. The building is relatively sympathetic in design and materials to the original buildings and has existing timber windows and doors and two small rear roof lights.

The site lies outside the built up area of Ardingly, within the designated Conservation Area and within the High Weald National Landscape (former Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty- AONB) and the Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

APPLICATION DETAILS

This application seeks planning permission for the replacement of the windows, doors and rooflights in the building. As originally proposed the replacement windows and doors were to be uPVC casement windows and composite uPVC doors.

During the course of the determination, and following the advice of the Conservation Officer, the plans have been amended to show double glazed timber framed windows and doors, with the later addition into the application of the replacement of the two rear facing rooflights with new double glazed timber framed roof lights.

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, the Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan and Site Allocations DPD.

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:

DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
DP17: Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC
DP26: Character and Design
DP34: Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets
DP38: Biodiversity

Site Allocations Development Plan Document

The SADPD was adopted on 29th June 2022. It allocates sufficient housing and employment land to meet identified needs to 2031.

There are no policies deemed relevant to this application.

Neighbourhood Plan

Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan -made March 2015.

ARD 5: Housing Design
ARD 9: Heritage Assets

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 hearings were concluded on the 19th March 2026. The District Plan remains at Examination until the Inspector has published his report, until that time 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
DPS6 Health and Wellbeing
DPB1 Character and Design
DPB2 Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets
DPC6 Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC
DPN1 Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Nature Recovery

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.

The High Weald Housing Design Guide 2020

High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2024-2029

High Weald National Landscape - Technical Advice Note: Dark Skies Planning Advice Note - July 2024
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 Impact upon Countryside and Ashdown Forest SPA/SAC
- Impact upon the High Weald National Landscape (AONB)
- Impact upon Conservation Area
- Impact on residential amenities
- HRA Assessment
- Biodiversity Net Gain

Design and Impact upon Countryside and Ashdown Forest SPA/SAC

Policy DP26 of the District Plan seeks to promote well located and designed development, to protect valued characteristics of the built environment for their historical and visual qualities and support sustainable communities and create accessible environments.

Also relevant in the determination of the application is the design guidance contained in the Mid Sussex Design Guide, which seeks good design in domestic alterations and extensions.

Also relevant is Policy ARD5 of the Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan, which refers to design and states:

'The Neighbourhood Plan requires all developments, including alterations to existing buildings, to be sympathetic of the character and scale of surrounding buildings and landscape'.

The site is located outside the built up boundary of Ardingly, within the open countryside and in the Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The relevant District Plan Policies are DP12 and DP17.

Policy DP12 seeks to maintain and enhance the quality and character of the rural area, whilst protecting the countryside in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty.

Policy DP17 seeks to prevent adverse effects on the Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC. New development likely to have a significant effect, either alone or in combination with other development, will be required to demonstrate that adequate measures are put in place to avoid or mitigate any potential adverse effects.

The proposed changes to the fenestration in the flats at Nos11-14 Hett Close will not be out of keeping to the design and approved materials used in the original development and will not encroach on public views, its rural setting or the Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC.

Consequently the design and appearance of the proposed alterations are considered to accord with Policies DP12, DP17 and DP26, Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan Policy ARD5 and with the relevant Design Guide principles.

Impact upon the High Weald National Landscape (AONB)

The proposed development is located within the High Weald National Landscape (AONB), where District Plan Policy DP16 is also relevant. This states that development will only be permitted where it conserves or enhances natural beauty and has regard to the High Weald AONB Management Plan.

Also relevant in the determination of the application is Paragraphs 189 of the NPPF, which state:

'189. Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in

relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.'

A similar ethos is found within The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan.

The proposed changes to the windows and doors at Nos 11-14 Hett Close will not impinge on local views. The alterations will not impinge upon the wider character of the area. Consequently this application accords with Policy DP16 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and the relevant NPPF and AONB guidance.

Impact upon Conservation Area

Nos 11-14 Hett Close are located within the Ardingly (East) Conservation Area, which was established in April 1984, and extended in March 1990.

This application needs to be considered with reference to guidance on Proposals affecting Heritage assets contained in Chapter 16 of the NPPF, re: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment. The relevant NPPF guidance the local planning authorities should consider in determining proposals affecting heritage assets is contained in Paragraph 210, which states:

'210. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

a. the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

b. the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and

c. the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.'

It is the statutory duty of the Council, as the Local Planning Authority, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the character or appearance of the Ardingly Conservation Area, as set out in Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The District Plan contains Policy DP35, which requires development to conserve or enhance the special character and appearance of Conservation Areas. The Policy requires that existing buildings that contribute to the character of the conservation area are protected.

Neighbourhood Plan Policy ARD 9 also *'requires development proposals affecting a listed building or conservation area or their setting to conserve or enhance the special quality and distinctive character of Ardingly.'*

Subject to the new windows, rooflights and doors being installed to accord with the submitted detailed plans, it is considered that the proposed alterations will enhance the appearance of the properties and will not alter the character and appearance of this part of the Ardingly Conservation Area, thereby preserving the area.

The proposed alterations are considered acceptable as they meet the requirements of District Plan Policy DP35, the aims of Policy ARD 9 of the Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan and the relevant guidance contained in the NPPF.

Impact on residential amenities

In assessing the potential impact of the proposed conversion works upon the neighbouring amenities consideration needs to be given to District Plan Policy DP26.

Policy DP26 requires that *'All applicants will be required to demonstrate that development does not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of the new dwellings.'*

In addition Principle DG45 in the Design Guide refers to the need to consider privacy of existing and future residents and it is noted that privacy may be affected by the relationship of buildings to each other.

The immediate neighbouring dwellings are located in the terraced row of similarly designed houses located to the north of the site, at Nos 1 to 6 Hett Close. The houses at Nos 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9 are the subject of a current application, for replacement windows, which is awaiting determination, as detailed above.

It is considered that the proposed changes at Nos 11-14 Hett Close will not negatively impact upon the appearance of the building and will not impact upon the outlook or amenities of the neighbouring residents living opposite the site.

Accordingly, the scheme would comply with Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and the relevant Design Guide principles on amenity.

HRA Assessment

Under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (the 'Habitats Regulations'), the competent authority - in this case, Mid Sussex District Council - has a duty to ensure that any plans or projects that they regulate (including plan making and determining planning applications) will have no adverse effect on the integrity of a European site of nature conservation importance. The European site of focus is the Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

The potential effects of development on Ashdown Forest were assessed during the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) process for the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031. This process identified likely significant effects on the Ashdown Forest SPA from recreational disturbance and on the Ashdown Forest SAC from atmospheric pollution.

An overall Habitats Regulations Assessment has been undertaken for the planning application which includes the type of development proposed.

Recreational disturbance

Increased recreational activity arising from new residential development and related population growth is likely to disturb the protected near-ground and ground nesting birds on Ashdown Forest.

In accordance with advice from Natural England, the HRA for the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031, and as detailed in District Plan Policy DP17, mitigation measures are necessary to counteract the effects of a potential increase in recreational pressure and are required for developments resulting in a net increase in dwellings within a 7km zone of influence around the Ashdown Forest SPA. A Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) mitigation approach has been developed. This mitigation approach has been agreed with Natural England.

This planning application does not result in a net increase in dwellings within the 7km zone of influence and so mitigation is not required.

Atmospheric pollution

Increased traffic emissions as a consequence of new development may result in additional atmospheric pollution on Ashdown Forest. The main pollutant effects of interest are acid deposition and eutrophication by nitrogen deposition. High levels of nitrogen may detrimentally affect the composition of an ecosystem and lead to loss of species.

It is considered that the proposed development will not lead to a significant increase in traffic across Ashdown Forest. There is not considered to be a significant in combination effect on the Ashdown Forest SAC by this development proposal.

Conclusion of the Habitats Regulations Assessment

The Habitats Regulations Assessment concludes that there would be no likely significant effects, alone or in combination, on the Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC from the types of development identified which includes this proposed development.

No mitigation is required in relation to the Ashdown Forest SPA or SAC.

A full HRA (that is, the appropriate assessment stage that ascertains the effect on integrity of the European site) of the proposed development is not required.

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 amended timber design for the replacement windows and doors is appropriate and will not appear out of keeping with the character and appearance of the property, within the Conservation Area or in this part of the High Weald National Landscape and in the Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC. The proposed works are considered to accord with District Plan Policies DP12, DP16, DP17, DP26 and DP356, Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan Policies ARD5 and ARD9, with the relevant provisions of the NPPF and adopted design guidance in respect to design.

It is considered that the living conditions and neighbouring privacy would not be adversely impacted by the proposed alterations. The proposal complies with District Plan Policy DP26, and the relevant Design Guide principles on amenity.

Consequently, the application is recommended for approval.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Anna Tidey