

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/25/3246	Case Officer:	Andrew Horrell
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	Demolition of the existing conservatory and front lean-to, and construction of a single-storey wrap-around extension, together with a part two-storey front extension to form a new entrance with pitched roof and gable end.		
Site:	Dens Barn Farm, Stonecross Lane, Lindfield, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 2QU, ,		
Validation Date	23 Dec 2025	Overall Expiry Date:	11 Jun 2026
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	12 Jun 2026
Target Date:	17 Feb 2026	Recommending Officer Signature:	Andrew Horrell

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	0
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Signed and Agreed By:	Joanne Fisher	Date:	12 Jun 2026
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/25/3246

**Dens Barn Farm, Stonecross Lane, Lindfield, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 2QU,
Demolition of the existing conservatory and front lean-to, and construction of a single-storey
wrap-around extension, together with a part two-storey front extension to form a new entrance
with pitched roof and gable end.
Mr George Alston**

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

None received

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

Naturespace: It is considered that the proposed development would present a low risk to great crested newts and/or their habitats. However, as the development is within the red Impact Risk Zone, as modelled by district licence mapping, I recommend that the following informative should be attached to planning consent:

"The applicant is reminded that, under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), it is an offence to (amongst other things): deliberately capture, disturb, injure, or kill great crested newts; damage or destroy a breeding or resting place; intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a resting or sheltering place. Planning permission for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this legislation. Should great crested newts be found at any stage of the development works, then all works should cease, and a professional and/or suitably qualified and experienced ecologist (or Natural England) should be contacted for advice on any special precautions before continuing, including the need for a licence."

Southern Water: No objections.

PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

No comment

INTRODUCTION

Planning permission is sought for the demolition of the existing conservatory and front lean-to, and construction of a single-storey wrap-around extension, together with a part two-storey front extension to form a new entrance with pitched roof and gable end.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

LR/008/96 - Construction of two garage buildings and new driveway (approved).
01/00073/FUL - Residential Extension (approved).

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

Dens Barn Farm is a two storey detached part pitched roofed and part barn hipped dwelling. The dwelling is accessed via farm track to side of Dens Barn. The dwelling is characterised by gables to front and rear, a side conservatory and various previous enlargements to the front, side and rear with front dormers. The walls are a mix of painted brickwork, hanging tiles and timber cladding with a mix of upvc and timber doors and windows.

To the north of the site is the driveway with open garage and wood store with brick wall to Dens Farm beyond, to the south of the site is the rear garden with post and rail fencing to fields beyond with the east and west having post and rail fencing with fields beyond.

The site is situated within the countryside and within the High Weald National Landscape

APPLICATION DETAILS

The existing conservatory to be removed approximately measures 3.66m in depth, 2.875m in width with a height to eaves of 2.55m and an overall height of 3.5m.

The front lean-tos are also to be removed. The proposed porch is forward of the existing porch by some 25cm.

The proposed single storey flat roofed wraparound extension approximately measures 10.5m in depth, 8.3m in width with a height of 3.2m. This is an enlargement from the existing footprint by some 2.6m to the side and 2.7m to the rear. This serves a utility, boot room and kitchen/dining room.

The proposed two storey front extension measures 1.453m in depth, 3.688m in width with a height to eaves of 5m and an overall height of 7m. This serves an enlarged porch and hallway on the ground floor and enlarged hallway on the first floor.

Internal alterations on the ground floor include the existing front kitchen altered to a study and hallway, the existing bathroom altered to a cinema room, the existing dining room altered to a playroom and the existing playroom altered to a WC to rear of hallway.

Internal alterations on the first floor include the number of bedrooms reduced from 6 to 5. The master bedroom served by an en-suite and a walk in wardrobe, bedrooms 1 and 2 served by an en-suite and bedroom 3 and 4 served by a shared bathroom.

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.

Specifically, Section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 states:

'In dealing with such an application the authority shall have regard to:

- a) The provisions of the development plan, so far as material to application,*
- b) Any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application, and*
- c) Any other material considerations.'*

Section 38(6) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 provides:

'If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.'

The requirement to determine applications "in accordance with the plan" does not mean applications must comply with each and every policy, but is to be approached on the basis of the plan taken as a whole. This reflects the fact, acknowledged by the Courts, that development plans can have broad statements of policy, many of which may be mutually irreconcilable so that in a particular case one must give way to another.

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.

Using this as the starting point the development plan for this part of Mid Sussex consists of the District Plan, Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) and Lindfield and Lindfield Rural 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
DP16 - High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
DP26 - Character and design

Neighbourhood Plan

The Lindfield and Lindfield Rural Neighbourhood Plan was formally made on 23 March 2016

There are no relevant policies.

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.

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.

DPC1 - Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside
DPC4 - High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
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.

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

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024)

The NPPF sets out the government's policy in order to ensure that the planning system contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 sets out the three objectives to sustainable development, such that the planning system needs to perform an economic objective, a social objective and an environmental objective.

Paragraph 12 of the NPPF states *'The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.'*

Paragraph 39 of the NPPF states *'Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.'*

With specific reference to decision-taking paragraph 48 states that planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

ASSESSMENT

Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside

DP12 of the Mid Sussex District Plan in part states:

'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.'*

Given the domestic nature of the proposal, it is not deemed out of character with the rural location of the dwelling. The proposal would maintain the character of the countryside in this part of the District.

The proposal will therefore accord with District Plan Policy DP12.

Character and Design

DP26 of the 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;*

- 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'

Principle DG49 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide states:

'Extensions should typically use simple, uncomplicated building forms to compliment and coordinate with the scale, form and massing of the original dwelling. The design approach may benefit from coordinating with the existing pattern of window and door openings as well as employing facing materials to match those of the existing dwelling. Otherwise, it should demonstrate the appropriateness of the alternative approach.'

Principle DG50 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD relates specifically to front and side extensions states the following:

'Front extensions are more likely to be acceptable where the building line is staggered or where the dwelling is set well back from the road. They are less likely to be acceptable in streets with a strong consistent building form as they risk disrupting the underlying order.'

Where front extensions are considered acceptable, they should normally be limited to a modest single storey or porch-type extension that reflect the character of the existing property

Side extensions should normally be subservient to the original dwelling and typically be set-back from the front of the house to help define the original building.

The gaps between dwellings can sometimes positively contribute to articulating (for example, through the consistent rhythm of repeated houses) and adding interest in a street frontage or by providing views / visible connections to the surrounding countryside. Side extensions will therefore need to appropriately respond to the character of the street form and will not normally be accepted where they close an important gap and view'.

Principle DG51 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD relates specifically to rear extensions states the following:

'Rear extensions which are not visible from the street and do not negatively impact on neighbouring properties can be expressed in many forms, including by adopting a contemporary architectural approach. With reference to DG49, they should nevertheless have consideration for the character of the existing building and the relationship of the extension with the side boundaries and adjacent buildings and gardens'.

The proposed wraparound extension is a fair enlargement to the existing dwelling but it will be subservient, and the use of white painted render is not out of character with the existing white painted brickwork used to the front and rear of the property.

The two-storey front extension is of a nature larger than expected under DG50 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide, but it will be subservient to the existing dwelling and set back from the front gable. The use of timber cladding is in keeping with the rural locality and not of character with the mixed materials which characterise the dwelling.

Due to the position of the dwelling set back from the highway, the proposal is not considered to cause harm to the character of the area.

Therefore, the proposal is deemed to comply with DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.

Impact on the High Weald

The legal framework for AONBs, (also known as National Landscapes) in England and Wales is provided by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW) 2000 which at Section 82 reaffirms the

primary purpose of AONBs: to conserve and enhance natural beauty. Section 84 of the CRoW requires Local Planning Authorities to 'take all such action as appears to them expedient for accomplishment of the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB'. The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act (2023) amended section 85 of the CRoW Act, to create a new duty on relevant authorities to 'seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area' when discharging their functions in AONBs'. A similar ethos is found within The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan which is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications in the AONB.

Paragraph 189 of the NPPF states:

'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.'

Policy DP16 of the Mid Sussex District Plan relates to the AONB and states that:

'Development within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), as shown on the Policies Maps, will only be permitted where it conserves or enhances natural beauty and has regard to the High Weald AONB Management Plan, in particular:

o the identified landscape features or components of natural beauty and to their setting;
o the traditional interaction of people with nature, and appropriate land management;
o character and local distinctiveness, settlement pattern, sense of place and setting of the AONB; and
o the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage'.

Given the domestic nature of the proposal and that the works are located in part within the hardstanding driveway and domestic garden where it would be seen within the context of the existing dwelling, the proposal is deemed to conserve the nature of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It therefore complies with DP16 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and paragraph 189 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 Policy DP29);'

Given the nature of the proposal and the relationship with neighbours Dens Cottage and Dens Barn which are some 85 and 35 metres from the dwelling, the impact on light and outlook is deemed not harmful and the degree of overlooking and loss of privacy is deemed no less than the existing relationship.

The proposal thereby complies with the relevant part of policy DP26 of the 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

The proposal is considered acceptable for this property and in this location. The extensions are of a suitable scale and design to the existing property and would maintain the character of the countryside.

preserve the character of the High Weald National Landscape in this part of the district. The proposal will not cause significant harm to neighbouring amenities.

Therefore, the proposal will comply with policies DP12, DP16, DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, the Mid Sussex Design Guide, the requirements of the High Weald AONB Management Plan, and the requirements of the NPPF.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Andrew Horrell