

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/25/0351	Case Officer:	Anna Tidey
Application Type:	Full Application		
Proposal:	Proposal to convert the existing commercial space into a self-contained residential flat, extend the current one-bedroom ground floor flat into a two-bedroom unit, install seven rooflights in the rear existing commercial space, add a new door and window on the side elevation, and raise the single-storey roof to match the existing structure. Remove garage door to provide parking space and bin store at front of property.		
Site:	S Taylor Jewellers, 30 Cantelupe Road, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 3BJ, , ,		
Validation Date	22 May 2025	Overall Expiry Date:	15 Jul 2026
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	30 Jul 2026
Target Date:	17 Jul 2025	Recommending Officer Signature:	Anna Tidey

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	2
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Signed and Agreed By:	Stephen Ashdown	Date:	30 Jul 2026
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/25/0351

**S Taylor Jewellers, 30 Cantelupe Road, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 3BJ, ,
Proposal to convert the existing commercial space into a self-contained residential flat, extend the current one-bedroom ground floor flat into a two-bedroom unit, install seven rooflights in the rear existing commercial space, add a new door and window on the side elevation, and raise the single-storey roof to match the existing structure. Remove garage door to provide parking space and bin store at front of property.
Mr Rajalingham Mathusan**

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

One representation received which contains the following objections:

- Loss of Outlook and Impact on Residential Amenity.
- Harm to the Character of the Victorian Streetscape.
- Loss of Trees and Greenery.
- Overdevelopment of the Site.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

Flood Risk and Drainage: No objection on Flood Risk and Drainage grounds. Due to the nature of the development, drainage should be managed via Building Regulations/Control.

WSCC Highways: This proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 116), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposals.

Further comments: The latest Location Plan seeks minor amendments to the proposed parking arrangement, with the proposed parking bay now being enclosed as a garage. Refuse storage is also to be accommodated within this garage. The LHA maintains its view of no highway safety or capacity concerns raised.

Naturespace Newt Officer: The proposed development is not considered to be relevant to the District Licensing Scheme in this case and we consider there would be no likely impact on Great Crested Newts or their habitats. I therefore have no comments.

Ecologist: Holding objection. Further information required with regards to bats. Recommend a single bat emergence survey between May and August to confirm the presence or absence of a bat roost in the building.

Further comments: Recommend the mitigation measures identified in the Bat Emergence Survey Report Revision A (ACP, May 2026), Biodiversity Enhancement Plan (ACP Consultants Ltd., January 2026) and Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) (ACP Consultants Ltd., May 2025) are secured by a planning condition and implemented in full, to conserve and enhance protected and Priority species particularly those recorded in the locality, including bats. Recommend that a Wildlife Friendly Lighting Strategy (Bat Emergence Survey Report Revision A (ACP, May 2026)), is secured by a planning condition to avoid impacts to foraging and commuting bats.

With regards to mandatory biodiversity net gains (BNG) applications are required to deliver a mandatory 10% measurable biodiversity net gain, unless exempt under paragraph 17 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024. We are satisfied that Section 6 of the Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) (ACP Consultants Ltd., May

2025) provides sufficient information that the development meets the de-minimis exemption. As a result, we are satisfied that the development is exempt from the statutory requirement of mandatory biodiversity net gains.

Natural England: Your authority has measures in place to manage potential impacts upon the Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC, which are agreed.

MSDC Street Naming and Numbering Officer: Request for Informative as development will require address allocation if approved.

TOWN COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

East Grinstead Town Council: Defer to MSDC Housing Officer comments as to whether the interior room sizes meet current standards. The property had been vacant for some years, but the proposal was fundamentally within the current building footprint, and so long as materials were sensitive to the local environment this would be acceptable. Committee resolved to recommend approval.

Further comments: No comment.

INTRODUCTION

This application seeks planning permission for works to convert the existing commercial space into a self-contained residential flat and to extend the current one-bedroom ground floor flat into a two-bedroom unit and related building works to the buildings at the rear of the site to change the former commercial space into residential living space with garage and bin store provision. The commercial unit on this site is vacant, formerly occupied by S Taylor Jewellers, at 30 Cantelupe Road in East Grinstead.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

GR/060/99. Demolition of existing temporary structure and rebuilding as a permanent building of a similar size. Approved March 1999.

GR/042/99. Installation of security roller shutter to the window of the shop front of jewellers. Approved April 1999.

GR/058/98. Installation of new shop front. Approved April 1998.

SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

The site is located mid-way along Cantelupe Road, to the north of the High Street, and to the west of London Road in the centre of East Grinstead. The site is sited adjacent to, but outside of, the designated Town Centre boundary, as defined in the East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan. The site is on the route of a pedestrian pathway that links the MSDC Vicarage Car Park, off Church Lane, to London Road.

The site is accessed off a one way road which is predominantly residential, with some businesses and a mix of housing types. Off Cantelupe Road there is a dropped kerb and an open front hardstanding area for off road parking. An attached flat roofed single garage is located on the northern side of the building.

The former jeweller's business no longer operates from part of the ground floor of the two storey building, which fronts onto the road, with a disused shop front. There are attached single storey additions on the rear, eastern side of the building which enclose a rear yard. There is pedestrian access off the public pathway via a side pedestrian door, and via the inside of the building, through the former shop.

The two storey building on the site frontage contains an existing one bed ground floor flat and a two bed first floor flat, each with independent access doors from the road frontage. The first floor flat has a bedroom that extends over the former shop unit.

The red line boundary of the site has been amended during the course of drawing up the legal agreement whilst determining the application to omit the hardstanding immediately to the front of the garage building.

The site is located within the Built up Area boundary of East Grinstead. The site also lies within a Red Impact Zone for Great Crested Newts.

APPLICATION DETAILS

This application seeks planning permission to enlarge the existing ground floor flat by taking in the former shop unit and a back room, to add a new bedroom and ensuite. The shop door is shown to be blocked up and an internal doorway formed from the central hallway serving the existing flat. To the rear of this a storeroom is shown to be formed into a new cycle storage room, with a new access door formed in the side wall off the public path.

At the rear of the site a new residential unit is to be created from the conversion of the remaining single storey buildings which are laid out in a U shape around a central yard. The yard itself is to be divided up, by the erection of a 1.8m high panel fence, between the three units to create a shared garden for the front two units and a separate garden for the new third unit.

A new covered access is to be created by the addition of a new door through the side boundary wall to access the rear garden space and the hallway serving the rear buildings on the site. The central lounge/dining space, utility room and bathroom for the new dwelling will be formed in the part of the building with a pitched roofline, which is orientated north/south at the rear of the site, backing onto the rear gardens of the neighbouring houses at Nos 24, 26 and 28 Chequer Road. A bedroom and an ensuite shower room will be created for the new one bed unit off the lounge.

Externally the conversion will require the addition of some new window and door openings. The submitted plans also illustrate the reuse of existing openings for the new unit. Seven new rooflights (four on the eastern slope and three new ones on the western roof slope) are proposed in the pitched roof over the lounge/kitchen dining area, one of which will serve the utility room and one for the bathroom.

The application has been supported by a combined Design and Access and Planning Statement, Sustainability Statement, a Biodiversity Enhancement Scheme, an Ecological Impact Assessment and the later submission of a Bat Emergence Survey, all of which are available to view on the planning file.

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:

- DP1 Sustainable Economic Development
- DP6 Settlement Hierarchy
- DP17 Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) & Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- DP21 Transport
- DP26 Character and design
- DP27 Dwelling space standards
- DP38 Biodiversity
- DP39 Sustainable Design and Construction
- 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.

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 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
DPS4 Flood Risk and Drainage
DPS6 Health and Wellbeing
DPN1 Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Nature Recovery
DPN2 Biodiversity Net Gain
DPB1 Character and Design
DPT4 Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure
DPH3 Sustainable Development - Inside the Built up Area

Neighbourhood Plan

East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan, made November 2016.

Relevant policies:

Policy EG3 Promoting Good Design
Policy EG5 Housing
Policy EG7 Housing mix and density
Policy EG11 Highway Impact
Policy EG12 Car Parking
Policy EG16 Ashdown Forest Protection

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.

West Sussex County Council Parking Standards Guidance Sept 2020

Technical housing standards - Nationally described space standard - March 2015

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 the development
- Design and impact on the character of the area
- Impact on residential amenities
- Access and Parking provision
- Dwelling Space Standards
- Ecology
- Flooding and Drainage
- Sustainability
- Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) assessment
- Biodiversity Net Gain

Principle of the development

The proposal will allow the redevelopment of a partly vacant retail unit to enlarge an existing flat and to provide a new one bed residential unit in a central town centre location.

Policy DP6 of the District Plan relates to Settlement Hierarchy and designates East Grinstead as a Category 1 Settlement. The policy permits development within the town, providing it is of an appropriate nature and scale, with particular regard to DP26: Character and Design.

The proposal complies in principle with Policy DP6 of the District Plan as the proposal is for a new residential development within the existing built up area of the settlement of East Grinstead. The site is located in a sustainable location in the town centre with local services and public transport connections in close proximity to the site.

The principle of development within the built up area accords with the Development Plan.

Also relevant in the determination of this application are East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan Policies EG5 and EG7.

Policy EG5 supports new housing development on land defined as 'previously developed,' subject to the compliance with other policies within the plan and where:

- ' a) The proposed development contributes to sustainable development;*
- b) An application is supported by robust assessment of the environmental and visual impact of the proposal and include as necessary appropriate mitigation measures.*
- c) An application is supported by a robust assessment of the impact of the proposal upon the local highway network and it can be demonstrated that the proposal will not cause a severe cumulative impact in terms of road safety and increased congestion after proposed mitigation is taken into account;*
- d) The proposal complies with design guidance contained in policy EG3 or a relevant Development Brief;*
- e) The proposal provides a mix of tenure types including private, social rented and shared equity (intermediate);*
- f) Contributions are made towards SANG and Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM); and*
- g) The proposal meets its own infrastructure needs.'*

Neighbourhood Plan Policy EG7 refers to Housing Mix and Density. It states that planning permission will be granted for new housing schemes where they achieve a minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare, unless local character indicates a different density level and this justification is provided, and provides affordable housing in accordance with District policy.

It is considered that the proposed development accords with Policy DP6 of the District Plan and the relevant criteria of Neighbourhood Plan Policies EG5 and EG7. The principle of this proposed development accords with the relevant policies in the Development Plan.

Design and impact on the character of the area

Policy DP26 of the District Plan relates to character and design and requires all proposals to be well designed and reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages as well as addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape.

Also relevant in the determination of the application is Policy EG3 of the East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan, which seeks development proposals which meet the following criteria:

- ' a) The form of the proposed development is proportionate and in keeping with the scale, height, materials and site coverage of the surrounding area;*
- b) The layout of the proposed development respects the topography and character of the site, protects important landscape features and does not harm adjoining amenity;*
- c) The proposal does not result in the loss of buildings or spaces that would have an unacceptable impact on the character of the area;*
- d) The proposal ensures satisfactory means of access for vehicles and pedestrians and provides adequate parking, cycle storage and refuse facilities on site;*
- e) 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;*
- f) New development must be inclusive and where appropriate make satisfactory provision for the safe and easy access for those with mobility impairment; and*
- g) 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*
- h) Proposals make provision for green infrastructure and biodiversity enhancement.'*

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 Design Guide refers to High Quality Building Design - Architectural Integrity in Chapter 6. Principle DG38 refers to principles of architectural integrity, and states:

' Applicants should establish an architectural approach and identity in the design of building that is borne from the place.

The facade and elevational treatment, roofscape fenestration and materials used in existing buildings within the locality should be a starting point for the consideration of architectural design of new buildings. However, this should not result in pastiche replicas of traditional buildings. Instead a re-interpretation of key aspects of their form should be demonstrated.

Good architecture involves the successful co-ordination of proportions, materials, colour and detail. Buildings should therefore be holistically designed with each part in harmony with its whole while appropriately responding to both its context and modern living requirements.
This includes:

- o The elevational treatment and overall façade design;*

- o The placement, proportions and design of windows, doors and balconies;*
- o A roofscape and form that creates a harmonious composition and minimises the visual impact of downpipes and guttering;*
- o The appropriate incorporation of dormer windows and chimneys;*
- o An appropriate palette of good quality materials that are preferably locally sourced.'*

The submitted plans show the conversion will use and adapt the existing buildings on the site, which will retain their existing materials, scale and form. The rear single storey buildings are subordinate in form to the host building on the site frontage and the adaptations to allow for the new residential unit will not be out of keeping in the appearance of the area.

The proposed development is considered appropriate in scale and design terms for the site. The proposal will therefore accord with the aims of Policy DP26 and Policy EG3 of the East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan and accords with the relevant Design Guide principles.

Impact on residential amenities

District Plan Policy DP26 requires 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.*' Neighbourhood Plan Policy EG3 refers to the requirement for development not to harm adjoining amenity.

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 of the MSDP 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.

In addition, Principle DG45 in the Design Guide refers to the need to consider privacy of existing and future residents.

The site is surrounded to the north, east and western side by residential properties. The introduction of a new dwelling unit in the buildings at the rear of this site could impact upon the amenities of the occupiers of the adjacent properties, particularly those adjoining the rear elevation at Nos 24, 26 and 28 Chequer Road. There is some vegetation growing within the rear gardens of those properties, which provide some natural screening.

Changes to the rear elevation of the building facing towards those properties are limited to the insertion of four rear facing, high level, roof lights in the existing roof slope of the building. These roof lights will be in part be screened by the presence of existing natural vegetation growing in the adjacent gardens. This vegetation lies outside the site boundary and is therefore out of the control of the applicants. There are no other proposed outward facing doors or windows in the elevations of the building to affect the privacy of the neighbouring residents.

Whilst there has been one representation received which objects to the proposal on various grounds it is considered that the conversion from a commercial use to residential use across the whole site will not cause significant harm to the amenities and living conditions of the neighbouring residents.

The proposal therefore accords with the requirements of Policies DP26 of the District Plan, Policy EG3 of the East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan and with the relevant principles of the Design Guide.

Access and Parking provision

The revised red line on the submitted Location Plan shows an amendment to the proposed parking arrangement, with the proposed parking bay to be provided within the existing 3.5m wide by 5.5m (approx.) deep garage, which is also shown as the refuse store. The existing off road frontage parking remains, but no additional car parking is to be provided. A secure cycle parking store is shown on the proposed floor plans.

The relevant District Plan Policy is Policy DP21, which states that in making decisions on development proposals MSDC will take account of whether the scheme is sustainably located, that there are appropriate opportunities to facilitate and promote alternative means of transport to the private car, such as walking, cycling and public transport, including suitable facilities for secure and safe cycle parking, consideration is given to the size of any garage provision and the scheme provides adequate car parking for the proposed development taking into account the accessibility of the development and opportunities for public transport.

Policy EG12 of the East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan 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.'

The West Sussex County Council Guidance on Parking at New Developments provides guidance on new residential development.

West Sussex Highways Authority raise no highway safety or capacity concerns against the proposal. They have commented on the proposed garage provision. They find that it does not have sufficient depth to meet Manual for Streets (MfS) specifications for garages (3m x 6m), and suggest it is only appropriate for parking smaller sized cars. They raise no highway safety concerns but suggest that the LPA should consider the potential impacts of on-street parking from an amenity point of view.

The site is located in a sustainable location, close to the station and public transport options. There are also town centre parking opportunities in walking distance of the site. It is considered that the town centre location of the existing and proposed residential units means that the occupiers may not require car parking provision.

The proposal is therefore considered acceptable with regards to the aims of District Plan Policy DP21 and Neighbourhood Plan Policy EG12.

Dwelling Space Standards

Policy DP27 of the District Plan refers to the need for new homes to meet with national space standards. It states:

'Minimum nationally described space standards for internal floor space and storage space will be applied to all new residential development. These standards are applicable to:

- o Open market dwellings and affordable housing;
- o The full range of dwelling types; and
- o Dwellings created through subdivision or conversion.

All dwellings will be required to meet these standards, other than in exceptional circumstances, where clear evidence will need to be provided to show that the internal form or special features prevent some of the requirements being met.'

The National Technical Housing Standards sets the nationally described space standards for new dwellings. This requires one bed single storey dwellings to have a minimum internal floor area of 39-50 square metres. The proposed property has a floor space of 68.9 sq m, which exceeds these minimum standards by 18 square metres, approx.

Housing Standards legislation requires that bedspaces are a minimum size of 6.5m for single bedrooms and 10 square metres for double bedrooms. The submitted plans show the additional bedroom for the existing ground floor flat will measure 15.75 sqm and the bedroom in the new residential unit will measure 12sq m. As such the proposed bedroom sizes are larger than the standards require.

Overall the proposal does meet the National Dwelling Space Standards and thereby accords with Policy DP27 of the District Plan.

Ecology

The site falls within the Red Impact Risk Zone for Great Crested Newts.

The relevant District Plan Policy with regards to biodiversity and its protection is DP38. This seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity.

The Newt Officer has been consulted on the proposed development and considers that there would be no likely impact on Great Crested Newts or their habitats as a result of the conversion works.

The proposal is therefore considered to accord with the aims of District Plan Policy DP38.

Drainage

The proposed development has been assessed by the MSDC Flood Risk & Drainage Engineers. The relevant District Plan Policy is DP41. The site is not in a flood zone and the team have raised no objection on Flood Risk or Drainage grounds. It is considered that the proposal will accord with the aims of District Plan Policy DP41.

Sustainability

District Plan Policy DP39 is relevant in the determination of this application. This seeks to improve the sustainability of development and incorporate measures to minimise energy use through the design and layout of the scheme, including the use of natural lighting and ventilation, explore opportunities for efficient energy supply, use renewable sources of energy and maximise efficient use of resources, including minimising waste and maximising recycling/ re-use of materials through both construction and occupation.

A sustainability Statement has been submitted with the application. This explains that the proposed conversion is designed to prioritize energy efficiency, reduce carbon emissions, and create a more sustainable living environment, and confirms that the following measures will be implemented: Enhanced Insulation & Thermal Performance, Energy-Efficient Appliances, Sustainable Lighting Solutions and Renewable Energy Integration, Low-Flow Fixtures, Rainwater Harvesting and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), Environmentally Conscious Construction Methods and Use of Sustainable & Locally Sourced Materials.

It is considered that the proposal complies with the relevant requirements of the NPPF, the criteria of Policy DP39 of the District Plan, and MSDC Design Guide Principle DG37, and consequently the proposal is considered to be acceptable in sustainability terms.

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.

A Habitats Regulations Assessment has been undertaken for the proposed development in this planning application.

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 is within the 7km zone of influence and generates a net increase of one dwelling, and as such, mitigation is required.

An appropriate scale of SAMM mitigation for the proposed development is £1,170, and if the approved scheme provides for a strategic SANG contribution, this would be £5,253.

The applicants have agreed that they would be prepared to make a financial contribution towards the SAMM Strategy and strategic SANG mitigation. Any contributions received will be ring-fenced for expenditure in accordance with the relevant SAMM and SANG Strategies.

The strategic SANG is located at East Court & Ashplats Wood in East Grinstead and Natural England has confirmed that it is suitable mitigation for development in Mid Sussex. The SANG is managed in accordance with the Management Plan and this document sets out the management objectives for the site and the management activities. Financial contributions for the strategic SANG will be spent in accordance with the Management Plan.

The financial contributions for SAMM and SANG mitigation have been secured through a Planning Obligation pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 ("Planning Obligation"), which was completed on 29.07.2026.

The Planning Obligation securing the SAMM and SANG contributions has been completed to secure the mitigation of the recreational impact to the Ashdown Forest. The proposal therefore accords with Policy DP17 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.

Natural England has been consulted on the appropriate assessment of this proposed development and agrees the Council's measures to manage potential impacts upon the Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC.

Atmospheric pollution

Increased traffic emissions as a consequence of new development may result in 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.

The proposed development was modelled in the Mid Sussex Transport Study as a windfall development such that its potential effects are incorporated into the overall results of the transport model, which indicates there would not be an overall impact on Ashdown Forest. Additionally, based on analysis of Census 2011 data, the proposed development is not likely to generate travel to work journeys across Ashdown Forest. This means that 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 the proposed development would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Ashdown Forest SPA and would not have a likely significant effect, alone or in combination, on the Ashdown Forest SAC.

The provision of mitigation in the form of both SANG and SAMM is essential to the proposals within the planning application to ensure the Ashdown Forest SPA is protected from any potential recreational disturbance impact arising from this proposed new development. The development proposed provides sufficient mitigation to avoid any potential impact on the Ashdown Forest SPA.

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

Having undertaken a Habitats Regulations Assessment of the implications of the project for the site in view of that site's conservation objectives, and having consulted Natural England and fully considered any representation received, Mid Sussex District Council as the competent authority may now determine the proposed development.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Biodiversity net gain is required under a statutory framework introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Under the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain this application comprises development subject to the de-minimis rule, meaning that this development is exempt from providing biodiversity net gain.

PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

It is considered the provision of an extended residential unit and a new one bed residential unit, as a result of conversion works at a vacant commercial unit, is in principle acceptable. The proposal will accord with the aims of District Plan Policy DP6 and the relevant criteria of Neighbourhood Plan Policies EG5 and EG7 for new residential development within the accessible town centre of East Grinstead.

The design and appearance of the proposed conversion works are considered to accord with the aims of District Plan Policy DP26, Policy EG3 of the East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan and with the relevant Design Guide principles.

The proposal is considered acceptable with regards to the WSCC parking guidance, District Plan Policy DP21 and Neighbourhood Plan Policy EG12.

The proposal would accord with the aims of District Plan Policy DP38 with regards to the impact of the proposed development upon Great Crested Newts.

The Habitats Regulations Assessment concludes that the proposed development would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Ashdown Forest SPA and would not have a likely significant effect, alone or in combination, on the Ashdown Forest SAC. Mitigation in the form of both SANG and SAMM has been agreed and a s106 agreement has been signed to secure the payments to protect the Ashdown Forest.

Consequently, this application is recommended for approval.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Anna Tidey