

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/26/1808	Case Officer:	Stefan Galyas
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	Conversion of garage to form private home office, pottery studio, storage and ancillary loft accommodation.		
Site:	Hazelwood House, Church Lane, Horsted Keynes, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 7AR, ,		
Validation Date	23 Jul 2026	Overall Expiry Date:	28 Aug 2026
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	14 Sep 2026
Target Date:	17 Sep 2026	Recommending Officer Signature:	<i>Stefan Galyas</i>

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	0
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Signed and Agreed By:	<i>Steven King</i>	Date:	15 Sep 2026
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/26/1808

**Hazelwood House, Church Lane, Horsted Keynes, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 7AR,
Conversion of garage to form private home office, pottery studio, storage and ancillary loft
accommodation.**

Mr Ben Sears

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

There were no letters of representation received in response to the application.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

Conservation Officer: *'In my opinion, the proposed change of use is not contentious in terms of impact on the character of the Conservation Area. The proposed physical alterations to the building will create a more contemporary looking structure, but one that remains sympathetic to the context in terms of its facing materials. The proposed alterations to the openings are not considered contentious, and the use of metal framed windows and glazed doors, alongside solid timber doors, will relate appropriately to the fenestration and doors to the house. Although positioned within the front garden the building is also, as noted above, relatively well screened in public views from Church Lane.'*

On balance, therefore, the proposal is considered to preserve the character and appearance of the Horsted Keynes Conservation Area. This meets the requirements of paragraphs HE4- HE6 and HE9 of the NPPF, as well as District Plan Policy DP35.'

TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

Parish Council: *'The Parish Council is very keen to see the dark skies in and around the parish protected. It is one of the key priorities that has repeatedly been expressed by parishioners throughout the Neighbourhood Development Plan process. Although no objection to the application, we would like to request that there are no rooflights and any windows have blinds which can be drawn at night to protect the dark skies helping to reduce light pollution.'*

INTRODUCTION

The application seeks planning permission to convert the existing garage into a private home office and pottery studio and to add external timber cladding over the existing brickwork, glazed openings at ground floor level, a glazed gable and a rooflight at loft level.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

There is no recent history of planning applications relating to the site.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application relates to Hazelwood House, a detached two storey dwelling which features a hipped roof. The existing dwelling is set to the eastern side of Church Lane and is positioned back from the roadside edge by a front driveway which slopes sharply up from the roadside moving towards the dwelling. The property is afforded a generous plot size with garden amenity space stretching out to the east. There is an existing garage outbuilding positioned to the south of the main dwelling which features brickwork, horizontal lapped timber and a tiled roof. The site immediately borders an open field to its northern boundary.

With regard to policy constraints, the site is located within the Horsted Keynes built up area. The site is also positioned within the Horsted Keynes Conservation Area and High Weald National Landscapes (formerly Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty).

APPLICATION DETAILS

The proposed development would add a number of glazed openings throughout, including those to the western elevation which would include timber shutters. Part of the northern gable would be altered to glazing and a new rooflight would be added to the western roof slope.

Proposed materials throughout would comprise vertical timber cladding to the walls, metal framed French doors, metal framed windows, a timber door and timber shutters.

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 the Horsted Keynes 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:

DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

DP26: Character and Design

DP35: Conservation Areas

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.

Neighbourhood Plan

Horsted Keynes Neighbourhood Plan (Made May 2023)

Relevant Policies

Policy HK4 Maintaining Local Character and Good Quality Design

Policy HK5 Infill Development and Domestic Extensions

Policy HK6 Conserving Local Heritage

Policy HK9 The High Weald AONB

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 is currently at Examination with initial hearings held in February/March 2026. The Council is consulting on Main Modifications which are required to ensure the plan is legally compliant and sound. 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:

DPS1 - Climate Change

DPS2 - Sustainable Design and Construction

DPB1 - Character and Design

DPB3 - Conservation Areas

DPC4: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

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) (August 2026)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2026 is a material consideration. Policies DP3, N4, L2, P3, HE4, HE5, HE6 and HE9.

High Weald AONB Management Plan 2024-2029

High Weald Housing Design Guide (November 2019)

Other Legislation

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 72(1) - Special attention to be paid to preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

ASSESSMENT

It is considered that the main issues that need to be considered in the determination of this application are as follows;

- Principle
- Impact on Character and Appearance, Including Heritage Assets
- Impact on the High Weald National Landscapes
- Impact on Neighbouring Amenities
- Biodiversity Net Gain

Principle

The proposed development notes in the description of development that the use of the existing garage would be changed into a private home office, a pottery studio, a storage area and ancillary loft accommodation. It is considered that whilst the proposed use would be of scale and amount that is ancillary to the main dwellinghouse, a condition requiring the outbuilding to be used as ancillary to the main dwellinghouse is considered to be relevant and necessary should planning permission be granted.

Impact on Character and Appearance, Including Heritage Assets

Policy DP35 of the District Plan and Policy HK6 of the Neighbourhood Plan relate to developments impact on Conservation Areas. It is however considered that this policy attributes limited weight following the publication of the new NPPF with policies HE5, HE6 and HE9 taking precedence.

National decision-making policies HE5 and HE6 of the NPPF relate to Assessing effects on heritage assets and Proposals affecting designated heritage assets. Policy HE9 of the NPPF relates to Conservation Areas.

Policy DP26 of the District Plan and HK4 and HK5 of the Neighbourhood Plan relate to character and design. However, policy DP26 of the District Plan and policies HK4 and HK5 of the Neighbourhood Plan are considered to have very limited weight as they are materially inconsistent with the NPPF, and greater weight should be given to policy DP3 of the NPPF.

Policy DP3 of the NPPF in part states:

'To create well-designed places, development proposals should also reflect relevant aspects of the following principles, as appropriate to the nature of the development and its location.

e. Built Form: use the pattern of buildings to define the arrangement of streets, squares and other spaces, promote compact forms of development to optimise the site's potential, distinguish between public and private areas, create focal points and, where appropriate, enhance views into and out of the scheme

g. Identity: create visually attractive, distinctive and characterful development to establish or maintain a strong sense of place and pride, including through the use of a coherent palette of materials, design features and planting'.

The below assessment is made whilst being mindful of this guidance and having regard to the statutory duty of the Council, as the Local Planning Authority, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area in Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The Council's Conservation Officer has provided their comments in response to the development proposal with the full comments viewable on the applications case file. It was identified that the house likely dates from the latter half of the 20th century and makes a neutral contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. It was also noted that the existing garage is of limited architectural merit but well screened by existing mature boundary hedging.

The proposed development would not increase the footprint of the existing garage but would make cosmetic alterations to its exterior. These alterations were considered by the Conservation Officer as being of a more contemporary appearance. Nevertheless, these were still considered to be sympathetic to the sites context and would remain well screened from public views along Church Lane. Accordingly, no objection was raised towards the proposed development. These comments by the Conservation Officer are agreed with by the Case Officer.

In light of the above, the proposal is therefore considered to preserve the character and appearance of the Horsted Keynes Conservation Area. The proposal would comply with the provisions of policies HE5, HE6, HE9 and DP3 of the NPPF, policies DP26 and DP35 of the District Plan and policies HK4, HK5 and HK6 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Impact on the High Weald National Landscapes

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.

Policy DP16 of the District Plan and policy HK9 of the Horsted Keynes Neighbourhood Plan require proposals in the National Landscapes to conserve or enhance natural beauty. However these policies carry very limited weight as they are materially inconsistent with the NPPF.

Policy N4 of the NPPF states:

'Development proposals within Protected Landscapes should be limited in scale and extent and sensitively located and designed to avoid harm to the statutory purposes and special qualities of the Protected Landscape. Substantial weight should be placed on the importance of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of these areas, and to conserving and enhancing wildlife and cultural heritage in National Parks and the Broads.'

The proposed development would only make cosmetic changes to the exterior of the outbuilding within the context of the existing residential curtilage and would not constitute an isolated form of development. As such it would not have any adverse impact on the wider landscape quality of the AONB and the complies with the requirements of Policy N4 of the NPPF, policy DP16 of the District Plan, policy HK9 of the Neighbourhood Plan and the High Weald AONB Management Plan 2024-2029.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenities

In assessing the potential impact of the proposed development works upon the neighbouring amenities consideration needs to be given to District Plan Policies DP26 and DP29.

However, policies DP26 and DP29 are considered to have very limited weight as they are materially inconsistent with the NPPF, and greater weight should be given to policies L2 and P3 of the NPPF.

Policy L2 of the NPPF relates to making effective use of land. Part L2(1dii) requires proposals to have *'acceptable living standards for residents and neighbours in terms of access to daylight, sunlight, privacy and external amenity space'*.

Policy P3 of the NPPF relates to living conditions and pollution. Part 2(b) of this policy requires proposals *'Not give rise to, or contribute to, an unacceptable level of access to daylight and sunlight for neighbouring residents and occupiers, or unacceptable levels of air, noise, artificial light, water, soil or other forms of pollution on or beyond the site'*.

Furthermore, Policy HK5 of the Neighbourhood Plan, among other matters, states that proposals should not cause unacceptable harm towards neighbouring amenities. This is considered to align with Policy P3 of the NPPF and therefore can be attributed full weight in regard to neighbouring amenities.

The proposed development would add a new glazed door opening to the outbuildings eastern elevation. Although this would face out in the direction of the neighbouring dwelling at Grindens, it is considered that the existing mature boundary hedge would be retained and would offer screening between. In any circumstance, the opening is not considered to be set at an elevated position and would therefore be limited in its outlook. To this end, the proposed development would not result in an unacceptable overlooking impact.

It was raised within the Parish Council's response to the application that blinds should be used for any new window openings or rooflights in order to mitigate light pollution to protect the dark skies. It is considered that a condition requiring this detail would fail to demonstrably be necessary or reasonable given the application sites location within the built up settlement. Furthermore, the proposed glazed openings are considered to be of a limited size and would therefore not result in a significantly unacceptable level of light spill.

Accordingly, the proposal is considered to comply with the provisions Policies L2 and P3 of the NPPF, Policies DP26 and DP29 of the District Plan and Policy HK5 of the Neighbourhood Plan in terms of neighbouring amenities.

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 appropriate in terms of design, will not negatively impact on the host dwelling nor its immediate setting, will not harm neighbouring amenities and result in an acceptable impact on the High Weald National Landscapes.

The proposal will comply with Policies L2, P3, N4, HE5, HE6, HE9 and DP3 of the NPPF, Policies DP16, DP26, DP29 and DP35 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, Policies HK4, HK5, HK6 and HK9 of the Horsted Keynes Neighbourhood Plan, the MSDC Design Guide and Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Stefan Galyas