Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/26/1886	**Case Officer:**	Anna Tidey
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	Remodelling and extension of the existing dwelling to create enlarged single storey 4 bed dwelling with a flat roof. Construction of detached double garage with ancillary space. Revised driveway layout to serve the reorientated access to the dwelling and the new garage.		
Site:	Soles Coppice, Brantridge Lane, Balcombe, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 6JR, ,		
Validation Date	31 Jul 2026	**Overall Expiry Date:**	12 Oct 2026
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		**Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:**	
Recommendation:	Permission	**Recommendation Date:**	16 Oct 2026
Target Date:	25 Sep 2026	**Recommending Officer Signature:**	Anna Tidey

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		**No of Representations:**	0

Signed and Agreed By:	Stephen Ashdown	**Date:**	16 Oct 2026
Comments:			

Date: 16th October 2026

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/26/1886

Soles Coppice, Brantridge Lane, Balcombe, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 6JR, Remodelling and extension of the existing dwelling to create enlarged single storey 4 bed dwelling with a flat roof. Construction of detached double garage with ancillary space. Revised driveway layout to serve the reorientated access to the dwelling and the new garage.
Mr David Young

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

None received.

CONSULTATIONS

Tree Officer: No comments received.

Ecologist: No Ecological objection, subject to recommended planning conditions.

Flood Risk and Drainage: Raise no objection on surface water grounds. Due to the site, size, location, and type of development they recommend two planning conditions: surface water drainage scheme and maintenance and management of the sustainable drainage scheme.

NatureSpace Newt Officer: We are satisfied with the additional ecological report. Recommend a compliance condition to secure the provision of a site-specific Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) prior to commencement of development.

Southern Water: There are no public sewers recorded within the site boundary. Surface water should not be disposed of into a public foul sewer and must comply with the Hierarchy of H3 of the Building Regulations.

PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

Ansty and Staplefield Parish Council: No objections.

INTRODUCTION

This application seeks planning permission for a proposed remodelling and extension works to an existing dwelling and associated works at a residential property known as Soles Coppice, off Brantridge Lane, near Staplefield.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

DM/24/1047. Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of a replacement 4no. bedroom dwelling to include an extensive planted roof and a secure garage building with an air source heat pump enclosure, bicycle and waste and recycling storage. Amended Plans received 20.08.2024 showing the dwelling moved south east, the driveway also moved outside the tree Root Protection Areas and a new vehicular turning head to allow larger vehicles to turn on site. Approved October 2024.
DM/23/1148. Erection of a single storey side extension. Erection of an outbuilding incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse. Approved December 2023.
DM/17/3089. Existing Lawful development application - breach of Agricultural Occupancy Condition of planning permission CD/023/95, has taken place for in excess of 10 years. Approved July 2017.
CD/058/96. Application for approval of reserved matters: erection of 2 bedroom single storey dwelling for occupation in connection with forestry work. Approved December 1996.

CD/023/95. Outline application: Erection of two bedroom single storey dwelling for occupation in connection with forestry work. Approved June 1995.
CD/016/91. Outline application for erection of single storey dwelling for occupation in connection with forestry work. Refused June 1991.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The property known as 'Soles Coppice' is located off a private access drive, in a large garden plot to the western side of Brantridge Lane in open countryside between Handcross and Balcombe.

Soles Coppice is a 3 bed detached property. The bungalow is built in brick with decorative vertical tile hanging on the barn hipped gables and a high pitched roofline with plain tiles over a T-shaped footprint. The property occupies a large residential curtilage within a rural setting. There are neighbouring properties, but these are sited at a distance to the north and south of the site.

The property is located in the High Weald National Landscape/AONB, and within the open countryside. The site also lies within the Red Impact Risk Zone for Great Crested Newts, and close to areas of Ancient Woodland.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The proposed development consists of proposed extensions to, and the remodelling of an existing bungalow to enlarge the living accommodation to create a single storey 4 bed dwelling. The proposal also includes a new outbuilding including a double garage with ancillary domestic space and a revised vehicular access to the dwelling from a relocated driveway.

The existing bungalow is sited in a large area laid to lawn with access via a long driveway from Brantridge Lane. The bungalow is set back and well screened from Brantridge Lane by an established conifer hedge. The current access track and hardstanding for parking to the front of the property have a hardcore finish. There is a patio for outdoor seating to the front of the property.

The submitted plans show the addition of an extension on the eastern side of the property which measures approx. 6.5m wide by 11.5m deep. This will enlarge the existing footprint of the bungalow to create an H shaped footprint to give a gross internal area of 184 sq m. A small addition of approx. 1m by 2.5m to the western end of the building is also proposed, which will make the footprint symmetrical.

The additions will allow the formation of a new open plan kitchen/dining room at the eastern end of the dwelling. A new front entrance and hallway will be created with access reorientated onto the northern elevation of the building. A central corridor will be created and from this a new lounge, toilet, four bedrooms, a utility/laundry space and a shared bathroom will be accessed. The largest bedroom will have an ensuite shower room.

The proposed new outbuilding with garage space will have a floor area of 70 sqm. This is to be sited to the north west of the dwelling with a new access driveway with turning space to the north side (front) of the remodelled dwelling. Internally the garage will accommodate two car spaces, cycle storage space, a small workshop, boot room and a shower room. To the rear there is an external recess to accommodate an ASHP.

The submitted plans illustrate that new hard and soft landscaping and planting will be introduced around the new dwelling and at the entrance to the new front doorway.

Externally the dwelling will be altered in height to a simple single storey form with a flat roof with two upstanding roof light features (clerestory windows), and an external covered terrace, extending around the south, east and west elevations. The submitted Design and Access Statement clarifies the vision for the updated appearance of the property, which follows recent approvals for changes under planning references DM/23/1148 (extension) and DM/24/1047 (rebuilding a replacement dwelling). The Design and Access Statement clarifies that rising costs have prohibited the scheme to rebuild the property, and driven this scheme to remodel and enhance the sustainability of the existing building, and to create a low impact building in the AONB setting.

Externally the dwelling will be finished with locally sourced Freshfield Lane brick walls, with new full height triple glazed powder coated aluminium windows and doors, and a flat membrane roof with glulam timber fascias and support columns to the roof overhang. The upstand on the clerestory roof features will be clad in vertical timber.

The application has been supported by a Design and Access Statement, a Planning Statement, Bat Emergence Survey Report and a Supporting Statement regarding Great Crested Newts. These documents 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 the Ansty and Staplefield 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
DP21 Transport
DP26 Character and Design
DP37 Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland
DP38 Biodiversity
DP41 Flood Risk and Drainage

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 relevant policies.

Neighbourhood Plan

The Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street Neighbourhood Plan was made in February 2017 and forms part of the development plan.

Relevant policies:

Policy AS3 High Weald AONB

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 is currently at Examination with initial hearings held in February/March 2026. The Council has consulted on Main Modifications which are required to ensure the plan is legally compliant and sound with further Hearings taking place in November 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 polices of the adopted District Plan.

Relevant policies:

DPC1 Protection and Enhancement of Countryside
DPC4 High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
DPS2 Sustainable Design and Construction
DPB1 Character and Design
DPT4 Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure
DPN1 Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Nature Recovery
DPS4 Flood Risk & Drainage
DPS6 Health and Wellbeing

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.

WSCC Guidance on Parking for New Developments (Sept 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) (August 2026)

ASSESSMENT

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

- Design
- Impact on AONB and countryside setting
- Impact on residential amenities
- Parking provision
- Impact upon trees
- Drainage
- Other matters - Ecology
- Biodiversity Net Gain

Design

Policy DP26 of the District Plan relates to character and design. However, this policy has very limited weight as it is materially inconsistent with the NPPF, and greater weight should be given to Policy DP3 of the NPPF.

Policy DP3 of the NPPF sets out the key principles for well-designed places. This aims for proposals to respond to their context, so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings, eg. through the use of appropriate materials and architectural features.

The Council's adopted Design Guide is a material consideration in the determination of the application. Chapter 9 of the Design Guide relates to household extensions. Design Principle DG49 states that extensions should respond to the design of the original dwelling and applicant will be expected to demonstrate how local character has informed the design proposal.

Design Guide Principle DG50 refers to Front and Side extensions and states that they will be resisted where they have an adverse impact on the street scene or the appearance of a dwelling.

The proposed extension and remodelling of the bungalow will change its appearance and lower the form of the building in its rural setting. The Design and Access Statement includes illustrations of the form of the recent approvals that have been granted at Soles Coppice under DM/23/1148 (for an extension) and DM/24/1047 (rebuilding a replacement dwelling). It is illustrated that the proposed scheme will be smaller in scale than either of the former approvals. The Design and Access Statement states:

'One of the Primary aims of this proposal is to ensure the reworked and extended dwelling is low impact. The approved proposal to enlarge the existing property DM/23/1148 facilitates an increase in overall volume to a total of 1079 cubic metres. The approved DM/ 24/1047, by comparison, is 140 cubic metres smaller in volume. The proposal that is the subject of this application has a total volume of 985 cubic metres, less than both DM/ 231148 and DM/24/1047.'

The proposal has been designed with careful consideration to the rural setting. The proposed dwelling and garage outbuilding are of a contemporary single storey design.

The dwelling will be extended closer to Brantridge Lane, but is still at a distant position and well within the site boundaries. Whilst of a different appearance to the existing bungalow, it is considered that the scale and appearance of the proposed changes will result in a single storey contemporary dwelling that will be appropriate within the rural area. The retained boundary screening will ensure that the building blends into its setting.

The design, external materials and scale of the extended dwelling and the provision of an associated garage are considered appropriate on this rural site. The siting of the new garage to the northern side of the site will be well screened from public viewpoints from Brantridge Lane. There are no public rights of way in close proximity to the site from which the new garage and remodelled dwelling would be visible.

Consequently, the design and appearance of the proposed extension and outbuilding are considered to accord with Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, the relevant Design Guide principles and to accord with Policy DP3 of the NPPF.

Impact on AONB and countryside setting

The site lies in the countryside, outside any built up area and within the High Weald National Landscape/ AONB. The proposed works affect an established residential property within an established residential curtilage.

The primary objective of the MSDC District Plan with respect to the countryside is to secure its protection by minimising the amount of land taken for development that does not need to be there. Policy DP12 is relevant. However, this policy has very limited weight as it is materially inconsistent with the NPPF, and greater weight should be given to Policies S3 (Presumption in favour of sustainable development) and S5 (Development outside settlements) of the NPPF.

District Plan Policy DP16 refers to development in the AONB (now referred to as The High Weald National Landscape). This policy now has very limited weight as it is materially inconsistent with the NPPF, and greater weight should be given to Policy N4 of the NPPF.

Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street Neighbourhood Plan Policy AS3 is also relevant. It seeks to ensure that development proposals in the AONB conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB area.

Policy N4 refers to Protected Landscapes (this includes National Landscapes in England). Paragraph 1 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.'

A similar ethos is found within The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan and the High Weald Housing Design Guide 2020. The Management Plan includes specific objectives (DS1 and DS2) that seek to preserve the dark skies of the High Weald AONB, and to protect wildlife and habitats from light pollution across the High Weald.

The enlarged dwelling, with increased areas of new glazing may increase the amount of light emitted from the site compared to the current dwelling. The recommended lighting design scheme for biodiversity condition recommended by the Ecologist will help to limit light emissions from the altered dwelling, with the benefit being for wildlife and to conserve the rural and landscape character of the rural setting and the natural beauty of the Landscape Area/AONB.

The proposed enlargement to the existing bungalow will bring the dwelling closer to Brantridge Lane, but established hedgerows growing on the land provide extensive screening from public vantage points. The character and appearance of this part of the Landscape Area/AONB will not be harmed as views of the altered dwelling will be limited. It is considered that new contemporary design may be accommodated within the National Landscape/AONB and the alterations to the dwelling and changes to the driveway and addition of a garage/outbuilding within its curtilage would not detract from the visual quality of the area.

Accordingly, it is considered that the proposal will preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the National Landscape/AONB, thus complying with the above policies and national and AONB guidance.

The proposal will therefore accord with District Plan Policies DP12 and DP16, Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street Neighbourhood Plan Policy AS3, The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan and the High Weald Housing Design Guide and Policy N4 of the new NPPF.

Impact on residential amenities

Policy DP26 in part seeks to ensure that new development does not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings. It is considered that this policy has very limited weight as it is materially inconsistent with the NPPF and consideration should be given to Policy P3 of the NPPF.

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'.*

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 nearest properties to the proposed replacement dwelling are Cambridge Cottage and Kings Cottage, which are located 70m and 76m to the north of the northern site boundary respectively.

The enlarged dwelling is located well within the site boundaries and will be screened by established trees and hedgerows growing on the northern and eastern site boundaries. As such any visual impact from the completed development will be very limited.

The northern elevation of the altered dwelling contains limited windows and doors, as the main extent of the glazed areas face away from the neighbouring properties, thereby shielding night time lighting from the neighbouring houses.

As such the proposal is not considered to cause unacceptable harm to the amenities of nearby residents. The proposal is therefore, considered to comply with District Plan Policy DP26 and Policy P3 of the NPPF.

Parking provision

The proposal will increase the number of bedrooms in the house from three to four. For a 4+ bed property located in this area of Mid Sussex the West Sussex County Council Guidance on Parking recommend 2.7 spaces should be provided.

Policy DP21 of the District Plan relates to transport and requires proposals to be sustainably located and to provide adequate parking. Whilst this policy now has very limited weight, being materially inconsistent with the NPPF, greater weight should now be given to Policy TR3 of the NPPF.

The WSCC Car Parking Standards require a dwelling of this size and location to provide 2.7 car parking spaces. There is also amble space to the northern side of the remodelled dwelling to allow for external parking to meet the parking standards for the 4 bed property. There is cycle parking provision indicated within the floorspace of the proposed garage.

The on site parking provision will accord with the requirements of the West Sussex County Council Guidance, the aims of District Plan Policy DP21 and NPPF Policy TR3 and can be supported.

Impact upon trees

With regards to the impact of the development upon the surrounding trees and hedges the relevant District Plan Policy is DP37. It is considered that this policy has very limited weight as it is materially inconsistent with the NPPF and consideration should be given to Policy N3 of the NPPF.

Guidance is provided in the new NPPF at N3: Trees in new development. This recognises the benefits that trees can provide for biodiversity, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and the character and quality of the environment. It requires that development proposals should make provision for the long term maintenance of existing trees which form part of the development, At paragraph 1(c).

The position of the proposed new garage is sited closer to trees that are growing on the site than the bungalow. A similar position for a new building was formerly agreed by the Tree Officer when considering the earlier applications under applications DM/23/1148 and DM/26/1047.

It is considered that the new construction works are sufficiently far away from the trees growing on the northern site boundary to ensure they are conserved. In order to protect the garden boundary hedgerow, and to control the new planting on the site, a planning condition is recommended to require details of the new planting and methods of protection ahead of the commencement of the development.

With this recommended condition attached to the approval it is considered that the proposal will accord with the aims of District Plan Policy DP37 and NPPF Policy N3.

Drainage

Policy DP41 of the District Plan relates to flood risk and drainage seeks to ensure development is safe across its lifetime and will not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. It is considered that this policy has very limited weight as it is materially inconsistent with the NPPF and consideration should be given to Policy F8 of the NPPF (Sustainable drainage systems and watercourses).

The dwelling is located on land within Flood Zone 1, with no designated Surface Water Flooding Zones on the site.

The Council's Flood and Drainage engineers have commented on the application. They consider the scale of the works require the submission of details of the proposed surface water drainage scheme and maintenance and management of the sustainable drainage scheme by condition.

With such conditions agreed the proposal will accord with the aims of Policy DP41 of the District Plan and Policy F8 of the NPPF.

Other matters - Ecology

Policy DP38 of the District Plan relates to Biodiversity and seeks proposals to protect and enhance biodiversity. It is considered that this policy has very limited weight as it is materially inconsistent with the NPPF and consideration should be given to Policy N2 (Improving the natural environment) and N6 (Areas of particular importance for biodiversity and geodiversity).

The application was accompanied by a Bat Emergence Survey Report and a Supporting Statement regarding Great Crested Newts has been received during the course of determining the application at the request of the Nature Space Newt Officer.

The Reports have been reviewed by the Ecological advisers and there is sufficient ecological information available for the determination of the application, subject to planning conditions to require mitigation and enhancement measures to accord with the details in the Bat Emergence Survey.

Planning conditions are recommended to ensure mitigation measures and/or works shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in the Bat Emergence Survey Report,bat licencing procedures have been followed, a Biodiversity Measures Strategy for protected and Priority or threatened species has been approved and a Wildlife Sensitive
Lighting Design Scheme has been approved.

The site is within a Red Impact Risk Zone for Great Crested Newts, with nearby ponds within the area. The Newt Officer has recommended that the planning permission is conditioned to accord with the RAMS requirements.

On the basis that the development proceeds in accordance with the RAMs, and only upon the submission of the additional ecological information, it is considered that mitigation measures will be in place to protect the relevant species to ensure the development will not harm the local ecology. On this basis the application complies with Policy DP38 of the District Plan and the relevant NPPF guidance.

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

Overall, it is considered that the proposed remodelling and extensions to the dwelling, the new garage outbuilding and driveway alterations are acceptable on this site, subject to appropriate planning conditions.

The proposal would comply with the aims of Policies DP12, DP16, DP21, DP26, DP37, DP38 and DP41 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, Policy AS3 of the Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street Neighbourhood Plan, the principles of the MSDC Design Guide, the AONB Management Plan and the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework. As such, it is recommended that planning permission should be granted.

Consequently this application is recommended for approval.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Anna Tidey