

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/26/1448	Case Officer:	Peter Davies
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	Addition of 14 solar panels to existing slate roof.		
Site:	Bridge End, 26A Lodge Lane, Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 8NA, , ,		
Validation Date	29 Jun 2026	Overall Expiry Date:	24 Jul 2026
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	12 Aug 2026
Target Date:	24 Aug 2026	Recommending Officer Signature:	Peter Davies

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	0
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Signed and Agreed By:	Steven King	Date:	18 Aug 2026
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/26/1448

**Bridge End, 26A Lodge Lane, Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 8NA, ,
Addition of 14 solar panels to existing slate roof.
Mr Toby Sexton**

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

None received.

PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

The committee recommend that permission is granted.

INTRODUCTION

The application seeks planning permission for the installation of 14 solar panels on the roof of the dwelling.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

No relevant history.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The property is a detached two-storey dwelling which is located within the Hassocks built-up area boundary and the Keymer Conservation Area.

The existing dwelling is characterised by white render walls, interlocking roof tiles and white fenestration. The site is accessed through a private road to the south of the site which is connected to Lodge Lane to the east of the site. Residential properties are located to the north, east and west of the site. The surrounding area is characterised by residential properties that are varied in their design, appearance and scale.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The application seeks planning permission for 14 solar panels to be mounted on the east facing roof slope. Each panel would be 1.762 metres by 1.134 metres in size and protrude approximately 0.15 metres.

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 Hassocks 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:

DP26 - Character and Design
DP35 - Conservation Areas
DP39 - Sustainable Design and Construction

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.

Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan (made June 2020)

Relevant policies:

Policy 5 - Enabling Zero Carbon
Policy 7 - Development in Conservation Areas
Policy 9 - Character and Design

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.

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
DPS3 - Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Schemes
DPB1 - Character and Design
DPB3 - Conservation Areas

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.

ASSESSMENT

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

- Design and Impact on Conservation Area
- Impact on Neighbouring Amenities
- Sustainability
- Biodiversity Net Gain

Design and Impact on Conservation Area

Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states 'In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any powers under any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of conservation preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.'

Policy DP35 of the District Plan states:

'Development in a conservation area will be required to conserve or enhance its special character, appearance and the range of activities which contribute to it. This will be achieved by ensuring that:

- o New buildings and extensions are sensitively designed to reflect the special characteristics of the area in terms of their scale, density, design and through the use of complementary materials;*
- o Open spaces, gardens, landscaping and boundary features that contribute to the special character of the area are protected. Any new landscaping or boundary features are designed to reflect that character;*
- o Traditional shop fronts that are a key feature of the conservation area are protected. Any alterations to shopfronts in a conservation area will only be permitted where they do not result in the loss of a traditional shopfront and the new design is sympathetic to the character of the existing building and street scene in which it is located;*
- o Existing buildings that contribute to the character of the conservation area are protected. Where demolition is permitted, the replacement buildings are of a design that reflects the special characteristics of the area;*
- o Activities such as markets, crafts or other activities which contribute to the special character and appearance of the conservation area are supported;*
- o New pavements, roads and other surfaces reflect the materials and scale of the existing streets and surfaces in the conservation area.*

Development will also protect the setting of the conservation area and in particular views into and out of the area.

New buildings of outstanding or innovative design may be acceptable in conservation areas provided that their impact would not cause material harm to the area.'

Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex 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;
 - protects valued townscapes and the separate identity and character of towns and villages;
 - 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 DP27);
 - creates a pedestrian-friendly layout that is safe, well connected, legible and accessible;
 - incorporates well integrated parking that does not dominate the street environment, particularly where high density housing is proposed;
 - positively addresses sustainability considerations in the layout and the building design;
 - take the opportunity to encourage community interaction by creating layouts with a strong neighbourhood focus/centre; larger (300+ unit) schemes will also normally be expected to incorporate a mixed use element;
- optimises the potential of the site to accommodate development.'*

A similar ethos is found within policies 7 and 9 of the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan.

Policy HE9 of the NPPF relates to Conservation Areas and states, amongst other things, that proposals that conserve those elements that make a positive contribution to the conservation area should be supported.

The proposed solar panels would cover the majority of the east facing roof slope. The solar panels would have very glimpsed views from part of the way along the private lane serving the dwelling as well as from the highway between a gap in the dwellings. Due to the very limited views from the public realm and within the Conservation Area, the proposal is not considered to cause harm to the character and appearance of the Keymer Conservation Area.

As such the proposal is considered to address the character and scale of the existing and surrounding buildings and landscape and it would conserve the character and appearance of the Keymer Conservation Area. As such it is considered to comply with policies DP26 and DP35 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, policies 7 and 9 of the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan and the NPPF.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenities

Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 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);'*

Policy 9 of the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan states that proposals will be supported when it: *'does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings, including taking account of the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight, sunlight and security.'*

Policy 9 states that proposals should not "unacceptable harm" amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants whereas policy DP26 of the MSDP states that development should not cause "significant harm". There is therefore some conflict between the District Plan and Neighbourhood Plan in this respect. 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 9 of the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan is considered to take precedence and therefore the test in this instance is whether the development causes unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenities as outlined above.

Given the nature of the proposal, unacceptable harm is not deemed to be caused to neighbouring amenities. Therefore, in terms of neighbouring amenities, the proposal is deemed to comply with DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and policy 9 of the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan.

Sustainability

District Plan Policy DP39 states:

'All development proposals must seek to improve the sustainability of development and should where appropriate and feasible according to the type and size of development and location, incorporate the following measures:

- o Minimise energy use through the design and layout of the scheme including through the use of natural lighting and ventilation;*
- o Explore opportunities for efficient energy supply through the use of communal heating networks where viable and feasible;*
- o Use renewable sources of energy;*
- o Maximise efficient use of resources, including minimising waste and maximising recycling/ re-use of materials through both construction and occupation;*
- o Limit water use to 110 litres/person/day in accordance with Policy DP42: Water infrastructure and the Water Environment;*
- o Demonstrate how the risks associated with future climate change have been planned for as part of the layout of the scheme and design of its buildings to ensure its longer term resilience'*

Policy 5 of the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan states:

'Development proposals will be supported that maximise the opportunity to include sustainable design features, providing any adverse impacts can be made acceptable. Residential development proposals that modify existing buildings (including extensions) should seek to maximise the inclusion of energy-saving measures and renewable energy generation.'

Policy CC2 (2) of the NPPF gives substantial weight to the benefit of improving energy efficiency of existing buildings from renewable and low carbon sources.

The use of solar panels is a renewable source of energy that improves efficiency. Therefore, the proposal complies with policy DP39 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, policy 5 of the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan and the NPPF.

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 would address the scale and design of the existing and surrounding buildings and landscape and it would not cause unacceptable harm to the amenities of neighbouring properties. The proposal would also conserve the character and appearance of the Keymer Conservation Area and it would have an acceptable impact in terms of sustainability. Therefore, the proposal complies with policies DP26, DP35 and DP39 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, policies 5, 7 and 9 of the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan and with the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Peter Davies