

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/25/2785	Case Officer:	Peter Davies
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	Installation of solar panels.		
Site:	40 Wentworth Road, Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 9SQ, , , ,		
Validation Date	31 Oct 2025	Overall Expiry Date:	5 Dec 2025
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	22 Dec 2025
Target Date:	26 Dec 2025	Recommending Officer Signature:	<i>Peter Davies</i>

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	0
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Signed and Agreed By:	<i>Stephen Ashdown</i>	Date:	22 Dec 2025
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/25/2785

**40 Wentworth Road, Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 9SQ, , ,
Installation of solar panels.
Anna Judson**

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

None received.

PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

Recommend permission is granted.

INTRODUCTION

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

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

DM/16/1775 - Comprehensive redevelopment comprising: up to 130 residential units; replacement golf clubhouse; new driving range; new golf holes; new maintenance store; strategic landscaping; and associated drainage and access works. Permission

DM/18/2616 - Comprehensive redevelopment of the site comprising of 165 residential units (Use Class C3), landscaping, car parking and associated drainage and access works. Amended plans received 26 October showing revised elevations, street scenes and landscaping. Permission

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application property is a detached two storey dwelling located on the north side of Wentworth Road, within the built up area boundary of Hassocks.

The dwelling has a pitched roof and is constructed from brick with plain roof tiles and white uPVC fenestration. The dwelling is set back from the highway with soft landscaping to the front and a detached garage and off-street parking to the west side. The locality is characterised by a new build estate with dwellings of a similar firm scale and design.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The application seeks planning permission for 7 solar panels to be mounted on the south facing roof slope. Each panel would be approximately 3.50 metres by 2.30 metres in size and protrude approximately 0.20 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

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 9 - Character and Design

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 (Regulation 19) is currently at Examination and stage 1 hearings were concluded on the 31st October 2024. There are unresolved objections to some of the Policies in the draft District Plan and as such, 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

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) (December 2024)

Paragraphs 8, 11, 131 and 135 are considered to be relevant.

ASSESSMENT

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

- Design and Character
- Impact on Neighbouring Amenities
- Sustainability
- Biodiversity Net Gain

Design and Character

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.'*

Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan Policy 9 states:

'Development proposals will be supported where they have regard to the Hassocks Townscape Appraisal, and where their character and design takes account of the following design principles as appropriate to the nature, scale and location of the particular proposal:

1. *Is of high quality design and layout;*
2. *Contributes positively to the private and public realm to create a sense of place;*
3. *Respects the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape;*
4. *Protects open spaces and gardens that contribute to the character of the area;*
5. *Protects valued townscapes and the separate identity and character of Hassocks, Keymer and Clayton;*
6. *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;*
7. *Creates safe, accessible and well connected environments;*
8. *Protects existing landscape features and contributes to the village's Green Infrastructure network;*
9. *Incorporates the use of local materials which are appropriate to the defined Local Townscape Character Area; and*
10. *Positively responds to the local vernacular character of the defined Local Townscape Character Area.'*

It is proposed to add solar panels to the south roof slope which faces onto the highway and would be visible from the streetscene. The proposed solar panels of an acceptable design to the character of the dwelling and the character of the area.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policy DP26 of the District Plan, Policy 9 of the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenities

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.'

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

Biodiversity Net Gain

Biodiversity net gain is required under a statutory framework introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This is a householder application within the meaning of article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. As a householder application this development is exempt from the requirement to provide biodiversity net gain.

PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the proposal is appropriate in terms of design and will not negatively impact on the host dwelling nor its immediate setting and will not harm neighbouring amenities.

The proposal will comply with Policies DP26 and DP39 of the District Plan, Policies 5 and 9 of the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan, and the requirements of the NPPF.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Peter Davies