

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/25/1907	Case Officer:	Rachel Richardson
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	Internal alterations to Grade II listed building including removal of non-historic internal wall, installation of sympathetic timber joinery, and insertion of conservation rooflight to existing later addition extension.		
Site:	Old Keysford Hall, Treemans Road, Horsted Keynes, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 7EA, ,		
Validation Date	28 Jul 2025	Overall Expiry Date:	29 Aug 2025
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	23 Sep 2025
Target Date:	22 Sep 2025	Recommending Officer Signature:	Rachel Richardson

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	0
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Signed and Agreed By:	Steven King	Date:	23 Sep 2025
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/25/1907

Old Keysford Hall, Treemans Road, Horsted Keynes, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 7EA, Internal alterations to Grade II listed building including removal of non-historic internal wall, installation of sympathetic timber joinery, and insertion of conservation rooflight to existing later addition extension.

Mr And Mrs Sharpe

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

None.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

Conservation Officer: No objection.

TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

None.

INTRODUCTION

This is a householder application seeking permission for internal alterations to a Grade II listed building. The proposed works will involve removal of a non-historic internal wall, installation of sympathetic timber joinery, and insertion of conservation rooflight to existing later addition extension.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

DM/22/3851 listed building consent application for repairs to timber frame. Consent approved 13.02.2023

DM/25/1908 listed building consent for removal of a non-historic internal wall, installation of sympathetic timber joinery, and insertion of conservation rooflight. Pending.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The proposed site, Old Keysford Hall, is a Grade II listed building dating from 1701 and located in a rural position outside Horsted Keynes. The house which is timber framed to the upper storeys has been underbuilt in brick and stone, and was substantially extended to the rear during the early 20th century.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The application proposes:

- o Remove later addition kitchen interior wall and replace with a reversible joinery element to allow for a better proportioned kitchen and entrance hallway, and
- o Addition of a flat roof-light within the later addition lean to, to gain more daylight into the kitchen space.

The proposal seeks to rearrange the entrance hallway and kitchen to allow for a better proportioned kitchen and space for a dining table. Shelving and joinery is proposed in the entrance hall area.

The internal joinery wall will be finished in a timber that matches with the existing timber panelling and other existing timber elements that form part of the existing entrance hallway.

The flat glazed roof-light will be minimal in its appearance and will not project more than 150mm from the existing flat roof.

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.

Specifically Section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 states:

'In dealing with such an application the authority shall have regard to:

- a) The provisions of the development plan, so far as material to application,*
- b) Any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application, and*
- c) Any other material considerations.'*

Section 38(6) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 provides:

'If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.'

The requirement to determine applications "in accordance with the plan" does not mean applications must comply with each and every policy, but is to be approached on the basis of the plan taken as a whole. This reflects the fact, acknowledged by the Courts, that development plans can have broad statements of policy, many of which may be mutually irreconcilable so that in a particular case one must give way to another.

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.

Using this as the starting point the development plan for this part of Mid Sussex consists of the District Plan, Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) and 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:

DP12: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside
DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
DP17: Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC
DP26 Character and Design
DP34 Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets

Site Allocations DPD

The SADPD was adopted on 29th June 2022. It allocates sufficient housing and employment land to meet identified needs to 2031.

Relevant policies.

None.

Neighbourhood Plan

Horsted Keynes Neighbourhood Plan made on 24th May 2023.

Relevant policies:

Policy HK4: Maintaining local character and good quality design

Policy HK6: Conserving local heritage

Policy HK9: The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Other Legislation

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

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 the 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:

DPC1- Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside

DPC4 - High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

DPB1 - Character and Design

DPB2 - Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets

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)

The NPPF sets out the government's policy in order to ensure that the planning system contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 sets out the three objectives to sustainable development, such that the planning system needs to perform an economic objective, a social objective and an environmental objective.

Paragraph 12 of the NPPF states ' *The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.*'

Paragraph 39 of the NPPF states '*Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.*'

With specific reference to decision-taking paragraph 48 states that planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

ASSESSMENT

The main issues for consideration are:

- o Design and character, and impact on the AONB
- o Whether the proposed alterations will protect the fabric and historic significance of the listed building
- o Ashdown forest, and
- o Biodiversity Net Gain

Design and Character and Impact on the AONB

One of the objectives of achieving sustainable development is to ensure that proposals 'contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment' (para 8, NPPF).

The site falls outside of the built-up area (within the countryside) boundary as defined in the DP. It is therefore necessary to consider the impact of the proposal in the local landscape in terms of the visual impact on the area.

Policy DP12 of the District Plan relates to the protection and enhancement of the countryside. In part it states:

'The countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty. Development will be permitted in the countryside, defined as the area outside of built-up area boundaries on the Policies Map, provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District, and:

o it is necessary for the purposes of agriculture; or o it is supported by a specific policy reference either elsewhere in the Plan, a Development Plan Document or relevant Neighbourhood Plan.'

Para 187 (b) of the NPPF requires proposals to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by '*recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside*'.

The site is with the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. 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.

Paragraph 189 of the NPPF states:

'Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks.'

Policy DP16 of the Mid Sussex District Plan relates to the AONB and states that:

'Development within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), as shown on the Policies Maps, will only be permitted where it conserves or enhances natural beauty and has regard to the High Weald AONB Management Plan, in particular:

- o the identified landscape features or components of natural beauty and to their setting;*
- o the traditional interaction of people with nature, and appropriate land management;*
- o character and local distinctiveness, settlement pattern, sense of place and setting of the AONB; and*
- o the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage'.*

Policy HK9 also requires that development conserves and enhances components of the landscape in the parish. In particular using local materials that enhance the appearance of the development.

The High Weald Management Plan and paragraph 189 of the NPPF are policies which seek to enhance the character of the settlement where viewpoints and spaces are preserved. The Dark Skies Technical Advice Note SPD has objectives to protect and maintain existing dark skies by minimising internal light spill and obtrusive external light pollution.

Policy DP26 of the District Plan relates to character and design. It 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:

- o is of high quality design and layout and includes appropriate landscaping and greenspace;*
- o 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;*
- o creates a sense of place while addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape;*
- o protects open spaces, trees and gardens that contribute to the character of the area;*
- o protects valued townscapes and the separate identity and character of towns and villages;*
- o 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);*
- o creates a pedestrian-friendly layout that is safe, well connected, legible and accessible;*
- o incorporates well integrated parking that does not dominate the street environment, particularly where high density housing is proposed;*
- o positively addresses sustainability considerations in the layout and the building design;*
- o 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;*
- o optimises the potential of the site to accommodate development.'*

Policy HK4 of the NP has a similar ethos to DP26 in that it requires all development to maintain the distinct local character and demonstrate good quality design using good quality materials.

Apart from the proposed installation of a new flat rooflight the other alterations will be internal and as such, will maintain the intrinsic character and beauty and conserve the landscape character of the AONB countryside in accordance with DP12 and DP16 of the MSDP and HK9 of the NP.

The rooflight will not project beyond 150mm from the existing roof and will therefore be respectful in terms of design and the character of the listed building.

As such the proposed design and alterations are considered to be in accordance with policy DP26 and HK4 of the NP.

Impact on the listed building

Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states 'In considering whether to grant planning permission (or permission in principle) for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses'.

Policy DP34 of the Mid Sussex District Plan relates, in part, to development affecting listed buildings:

'Development will be required to protect listed buildings and their settings. This will be achieved by ensuring that:

- o A thorough understanding of the significance of the listed building and its setting has been demonstrated. This will be proportionate to the importance of the building and potential impact of the proposal;*
- o Alterations or extensions to a listed building respect its historic form, scale, setting, significance and fabric. Proposals for the conversion or change of use of a listed building retain its significance and character whilst ensuring that the building remains in a viable use;*
- o Traditional building materials and construction techniques are normally used. The installation of uPVC windows and doors will not be acceptable;*
- o Satellite antennae, solar panels or other renewable energy installations are not sited in a prominent location, and where possible within the curtilage rather than on the building itself;*
- o Special regard is given to protecting the setting of a listed building;*
- o Where the historic fabric of a building may be affected by alterations or other proposals, the applicant is expected to fund the recording or exploratory opening up of historic fabric'.*

HK6 states inter alia that development should:

'preserve or enhance the special architectural or historic interest of listed buildings'. Also that all, 'planning applications which affect a heritage asset or its setting, should be accompanied by a Heritage Statement, which demonstrates a clear understanding of the heritage significance of the assets affected and which then informs the development of sensitive proposals which meet the statutory requirements for their preservation and enhancement.'

The application is accompanied by a Heritage Statement.

The Conservation Officer has no objection and has commented as follows:

'Old Keysford Hall is one part of a Grade II listed building located in a rural position outside Horsted Keynes. The building has been subdivided, so that the rear portion is now a separate property, Keysford. The building was formerly a farmhouse, and former farm buildings including a substantial barn survive in a courtyard arrangement to the north-west of the house. These would be regarded as curtilage listed.

The applications are accompanied by a summary heritage statement, which confirms the likely date of construction of Old Keysford Hall as c.1701, but suggests it is possible that this formed a later high-end wing to a possible earlier house (now the west wing), which may have then taken on a service range status. This is speculative, however, as the west wing (now Keysford) was not assessed.

Within the summary heritage statement the existing partition between the kitchen and hallway is dated on plan (Plate 5) as a 20th century insertion. This work may have been carried out when the rear wall of the building was partially removed and a lean-to outshot added to the back of the hall to create the current kitchen space. This statement also notes that the existing staircase, which sits at the south-east

corner of the central hall, was previously enclosed to its northern side by a partition, which has been removed.

The summary heritage statement suggests that the significance of Old Keysford Hall lies partly in the high degree of survival of the original floor plan, and the minimal later changes to the building, which retain visible evidence of original features and fabric where these have been altered or removed. I see no reason to disagree with this assessment.

The current proposal is for works at ground floor to the building comprising:

- *Removal of the existing partition between the original hallway and the kitchen;*
- *Construction of a new partition further into the hall, enlarging the kitchen;*
- *Construction of a partition partly enclosing the northern side of the staircase adjacent to this; and*
- *Addition of a plateau rooflight to the flat roof of the existing rear lean-to.*

To consider these works in turn:

- *The existing partition in this position is a 20th century addition and is not of special interest. Its removal is therefore not considered contentious.*
- *The proposed new partition, because of its revised position, will encroach further into the original proportions of the hall. However, the harm which will result from this will be balanced against the lighter-weight construction of the partition (c.f. the existing solid partition), as it will include double glazed doors and high-level windows, which will potentially allow a greater appreciation than the existing situation of the original proportions of the room. The internal elevations provided show that these windows will not be obscured by high level units to either the hall or kitchen side. On balance this aspect of the proposal is considered acceptable.*
- *The new partition adjacent to the stairway will be a continuation of that discussed above, enclosing this side of the extended kitchen. Given the previous existence of a partition in this position, this aspect of the proposal is not considered contentious in principle.*
- *Although the drawings and DAS are clear that the 'front', hall-facing element of the new partitioning will be set behind the existing post to the base of the stairs, so that this fabric is not impacted, the relationship of the new partition to the side of the extended kitchen adjacent to the staircase with the overlying beam which carries evidence of the former partition in this position is less clear. I would suggest that a further detailed drawing is provided to demonstrate that the new partition will not harm or obscure surviving evidence of the original, removed partition in this position (see plates on p.11 of the heritage statement).*
- *The proposed plateau rooflight affects only 20th century fabric and should have only a minimal impact on the appearance of the building. Subject to detail, this aspect of the proposal is not considered contentious.*

Subject to the above detail regarding the position of the new partition adjacent to the staircase, the proposal is considered to preserve the special interest of the listed building, meeting the requirements of District Plan Policy DP34 and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.'

Following the above comments the applicants submitted an amended drawing (12 A) and further details and the Conservation Officer subsequently commented that, *'The annotation makes it clear that the new structure will not harm or obscure the adjacent historic fabric.'*

Your Officer has no reason to come to a different view and is satisfied that the proposed alterations comply with the criteria of relevant policies DP34 and HK6 of the NP.

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

Planning legislation requires the application to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. It is therefore necessary for the planning application to be assessed against the policies in the Development Plan and then to take account of other material planning considerations including the NPPF. The Development Plan in this instance consists of the Mid Sussex District Plan, the Site Allocations Development Plan Document and the Horsted Keynes Neighbourhood Plan.

Given the above, it is recommended that permission be granted and the proposed alterations to the listed building are acceptable and comply with the relevant policies of the DP and NP as well as national policy within the NPPF. The proposed development will protect the special character of the Listed Building.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Rachel Richardson