

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/26/0478	Case Officer:	Catherine Cardin
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	Proposed roof extension and loft conversion with dormer window housing a Juliet balcony to right side elevation and roof light windows to front, rear and side elevations		
Site:	17 Barnfield, Balcombe, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 6FW, , ,		
Validation Date	25 Feb 2026	Overall Expiry Date:	20 Mar 2026
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	9 Apr 2026
Target Date:	22 Apr 2026	Recommending Officer Signature:	Catherine Cardin

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	1
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Signed and Agreed By:	Stephen Ashdown	Date:	15 Apr 2026
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/26/0478

**17 Barnfield, Balcombe, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 6FW, ,
Proposed roof extension and loft conversion with dormer window housing a Juliet balcony to
right side elevation and roof light windows to front, rear and side elevations
Mr And Mrs Russell**

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

Two letters of representation were received which raised concerns regarding:

- Impact on character and appearance of the area
- Loss of light to no.11
- Consideration of alternatives
- Overbearing impact

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

Balcombe Parish Council objects to the planning application. The Parish Council considers that the proposed roof extension and loft conversion would alter the character of the existing dwelling and have a negative impact on the street scene.

Members also felt the proposal would appear overbearing and that the design and resulting appearance are not in keeping with the character of the area or the local vernacular.

INTRODUCTION

The application seeks planning permission for a proposed roof extension and loft conversion with dormer window housing a Juliet balcony to right side elevation and roof light windows to front, rear and side elevations.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

DM/18/4541- Erection of 16 no. dwellings and associated development (amended plans and documents received 28th March 2019, 29th April 2019 and 18th September 2019). Permission.

DM/25/2676- Proposed loft conversion. Permission.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

17 Barnfield is a detached two-storey property. The dwelling is characterised by red brick, white upvc windows and a plain tile roof. The property had hanging tiles to the first-floor elevation. The property sits in a elevated position with land sloping away to the east.

The property lies within a cul-de-sac within a modern housing estate. The application site is located within the built-up area boundary of Balcombe and is within the High Weald AONB. A neighbouring property is located to the north. Highway is located to the south and west, whilst open countryside lies to the east.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The proposed roof extension would extend the existing ridge line by 2 metres on each end to have a total length of 9.5 metres. The eaves would be retained. As a result, the roof form would be converted from a hipped to half hipped.

It is proposed to construct a dormer window with Juliette balcony on the side (eastern) elevation. The proposal also includes the installation of no.7 rooflights.

It is also proposed to install a new window on the rear (northern) and side (western) first floor elevations. These would match the existing.

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 Balcombe 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

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

The Balcombe Neighbourhood Plan was made on 22 September 2016.

Relevant policies:
Policy 3 - Design

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 hearings were concluded on the 19th March 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 policies of the adopted District Plan.

Relevant policies:
DPS2 - Sustainable Design and Construction

DPB1 - Character and Design
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) (December 2024)

ASSESSMENT

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

- Impact on character and appearance of the area
- Impact on the High Weald AONB
- Neighbouring amenities
- Biodiversity Net Gain

Impact on character and appearance of the area

Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan relates to design and character and 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 DP27);
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 3 of Balcombe Neighbourhood Plan relates to design and states:

'The scale, density, massing, height, landscape design, layout and materials of all development proposals, including alterations to existing buildings, will be required to reflect the architectural and historic character and scale of the surrounding buildings and to avoid any significant detrimental effect on the landscape and natural beauty of the High Weald AONB and the significance and character or appearance of the Balcombe Conservation Area, where a building will command a view.'

Principle DG49 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide relates to general principles for extensions and states that:

Extensions should respond to the design of the original dwelling and applicants will be expected to demonstrate how local character has informed the design proposal. Extensions should also normally be designed to be well-integrated with the existing scale, form and massing allowing the original building to remain the dominant element of the property whether it has one or several additions.

Principle DG52 relates to loft conversions and roof extensions and states that:

'A loft conversion is a space efficient means of extending the amount of living accommodation in a dwelling. Roof accommodation is normally reliant on dormer windows and rooflights to provide light and ventilation. However, if they are out of scale or out of character with the roofscape and proportions of a dwelling they can have an adverse impact on the character of both the dwelling and the streetscape.

The roof pitch and form are intrinsic to a building's character and roof extensions should be sensitive to this. Roof extensions and dormer windows that alter the existing ridge of the roof or significantly alter the roof profile of a building will not normally be acceptable, particularly on the front roof slope, and where there is a strong established roofline.

Where a clear rhythm of fenestration is established, the position and proportion of dormer windows should respond to existing windows and / or doors.

The concerns of the Parish Council and letters of representation regarding the design are acknowledged and have been carefully considered.

The application site lies within a modern residential development in Barnfield, characterised by a variety of roof forms. The surrounding built form displays a variety of roof designs, including hipped, half hipped and pitched roof profiles.

The proposal would amend the existing roof form from a fully hipped roof to a half hipped roof; however, there would be no increase in either the eaves height or ridge height. As a result, the overall scale of the building would remain unchanged. The proposed loft conversion, roof extension and dormer window with Juliette balcony are considered to be proportionate additions that respect the form and proportions of the host dwelling and are visually subordinate to the main roof structure. Furthermore, the design and positioning of the proposed fenestration is considered to respond appropriately to the scale, form and alignment of the existing windows and doors.

It is considered that the proposed roof extension would not result in significant alteration to the overall roof profile when viewed within the wider street scene. Given the varied roofscape within the surrounding area, it is not considered that the introduction of a half-hipped roof would appear incongruous or result in harm to the character or appearance of the area.

On this basis, the proposal is therefore considered to address the character of the existing dwelling and the surrounding buildings, and as such the proposal is deemed to comply with the above part of policy DP26 of the District Plan, and principles DG49 and DG52 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD and Policy 3 of Balcombe Neighbourhood Plan.

Impact on the High Weald AONB

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 DP12 in the District Plan seeks to protect the character of the countryside and states that development will be permitted where it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District and is supported by a specific policy reference in the District Plan, Neighbourhood Plan or Development Plan Document. In this case policy DP26 is the relevant policy that supports high quality development.

The application relates to an existing residential property within the built-up area of Balcombe. As such the proposal would not form an isolated development within the wider landscape. The proposal would not have any adverse impact on the landscape quality of the AONB due to it being viewed in context with existing built form.

As such the proposal would comply with the requirements of Policy DP16 of the District Plan, The High Weald AONB Management Plan and paragraph 189 of the NPPF.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenities

In terms of impact on neighbouring amenities, Policy DP26 of the District Plan states proposals should *'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'*.

The concerns in relation to potential overbearing impact and loss of neighbouring amenity are noted and have been carefully considered.

To the north is 15 Barnfield. Given that this neighbouring dwelling would be offset from the proposal by some 30 metres, it is not considered that the development would give rise to significant overlooking concerns.

To the west is 11 Barnfield. A window is proposed on the side (western) elevation. A new window is proposed on the western side elevation, which would result in a limited degree of overlooking towards a secondary bedroom window at this neighbouring property. However, the dwellings are separated by a distance of approximately 9 metres, with the intervening space comprising a public highway. This relationship is not uncommon within a built-up area, and it is considered that the resulting level of overlooking would not be so significant as to cause unacceptable harm to residential amenity or justify refusal of the application. Furthermore, it is not considered that given this relationship, there would be any significant loss of light as a result of the proposal.

To the south is 14 Barnfield. Given the separation distance of approximately 27 metres, it is not considered that the proposal would have an overbearing impact or result in an unacceptable loss of privacy or outlook of this neighbouring property.

Due to the domestic nature of the proposed development, it is considered that there would not be a harmful impact in terms of noise, air and light pollution.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policy DP26 of the District Plan, and the relevant principles of the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD.

Other matters

Concern has been raised regarding the consideration of alternative designs. There is not statutory requirement for applicants to submit or justify alternative design options as part of a planning application. The assessment must therefore focus on whether the scheme proposed accords with the Development

Plan and other material considerations. On this basis, the design is considered acceptable for the reasons set out above in this report.

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

The proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of design, size and scale to the dwellinghouse and locality. It is considered that the proposal would not be harmful to the High Weald AONB and would not be harmful the amenities of neighbours.

In conclusion, the proposal would accord with the requirements of policies DP16 and DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan. It is therefore considered acceptable.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Catherine Cardin