

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/26/0968	Case Officer:	Stefan Galyas
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	Proposed loft conversion incorporating 1no. dormer and 2no. rooflights. Alterations to fenestration.		
Site:	Vicarage Cottage, Mill Lane, Sayers Common, Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 9HN, ,		
Validation Date	16 Apr 2026	Overall Expiry Date:	18 Jun 2026
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Refusal	Recommendation Date:	3 Jun 2026
Target Date:	11 Jun 2026	Recommending Officer Signature:	<i>Stefan Galyas</i>

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	2
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Signed and Agreed By:	<i>Steven King</i>	Date:	3 Jun 2026
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/26/0968

**Vicarage Cottage, Mill Lane, Sayers Common, Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 9HN,
Proposed loft conversion incorporating 1no. dormer and 2no. rooflights. Alterations to
fenestration.**

Mr And Mrs Aloy

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

There were two letters of representation received in response to the proposed development. Both letters sought to support the planning application and quoted the following reasons:

- Well designed and sympathetic for the creation of new living space.
- The new windows not causing any overlooking.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

Conservation Officer: 'In summary the proposal because of the position, scale, form, and detailed design of the box dormer addition is considered to be harmful, through impact on setting, to the special interests of the adjacent listed buildings. This fails to meet the requirements of District Plan Policy DP34. In terms of the NPPF I would consider the harm caused to all of the affected assets to be less than substantial, at the lower end of the scale with respect to The Thatch, and at the very low end with respect to the listed buildings at Cobbs Mill. The balancing exercise set out in paragraph 215 will therefore apply. As set out above, the proposal is also contrary to the requirements of the Council's adopted Design Guide.'

TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

Parish Council: 'The Committee agrees in principle to the extension of this property. However, the committee has concerns regarding the current design, mass and scaling of the dormer.'

INTRODUCTION

The application seeks planning permission for the demolition of the existing chimney stack and for the development of a dormer to the south-western roof slope. Two new rooflights would be added to the north-east and the north-west roof slopes. Further alterations would be carried out to the fenestration arrangements.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

01/01463/FUL - Two storey extension and living room extension. Permission 21.12.2001.
04/02239/FUL - Proposed 2 storey gabled roof extension to the front elevation. Permission 18.10.2004.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application relates to Vicarage Cottage, a three storey detached dwelling which features a cross pitched roof. The property is set to the northern side of Mill Lane and is served access by a tarmacked vehicular access to the south-east and gated pedestrian access. The dwelling is provided ample garden amenity space which wraps around the property to the north and east whereby some single storey outbuildings are positioned. In terms of external materials, the existing dwelling is composed of brick and tile hanging to the walls, clay roof tiles and uPVC casements windows.

With regard to the site's locality, there are a cluster of other residential semidetached properties set

to the northern side of the highway which are considered to be of a traditional appearance. The sites locality is considered to be verdant and semi-rural in character. The site is not set within any designated area or settlement boundary as defined by the District Plan. The site is adjacent to the grade II listed building called The Thatch and further to the east the grade II* listed Cobbs Mill and grade II listed Cobbs Mill House.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The proposal would demolish the existing brick built chimney and to the same south-eastern roof slope would develop a dormer which would measure at 2.8m deep, 7.6m wide and 2.3m in maximum height. The proposed dormer would be composed of clay tile hanging, a vertical lead projection and sheet lead finish to the walls.

The proposed development would also include the addition of a new rooflight to both the northeastern roof slope and to the north-western roof slope. Further alterations would be carried out to re-arrange the properties fenestration.

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 Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common 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

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.

There are no relevant policies.

Neighbourhood Plan

Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan (February 2015)

None relevant.

Other Legislation

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

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 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:

DPS1 - Climate Change

DPS2 - Sustainable Design and Construction

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 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 is a material consideration. Paragraphs 2, 8, 11, 39, 48, 96, 98, 131, 134, 135, 139, 189, 207, 208, 209, 212-215, 219 & 220.

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 Design, Including Heritage Assets
- Impact on Neighbouring Amenities
- Biodiversity Net Gain

Impact on Character and Design, Including Heritage Assets

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.*'

With regard to the setting of the listed building, DP34 requires:

'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.'*

Paragraph 207 of the NPPF requires the applicant to describe the significance of any heritage asset affected. Significance is defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as '*The value of a heritage asset to*

this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.' The applicant has failed to provide a Heritage Statement and therefore this criterion has not been met.

Paragraph 208 of the NPPF requires the Local Planning Authority to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected and take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal.

The listed building is considered to be significant in heritage terms by virtue of its designation and this significance is likely to arise from its historical, aesthetic (fortuitous) value and historical (illustrative) value.

The NPPF states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Paragraphs 212 - 215 of the NPPF states:

'212. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

213. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;*
- b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.*

214. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.*

215. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.'

Policy DP26 of the 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:

- 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 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'

Principle DG49 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide states:

'Extensions should typically use simple, uncomplicated building forms to compliment and coordinate with the scale, form and massing of the original dwelling. The design approach may benefit from coordinating with the existing pattern of window and door openings as well as employing facing materials to match those of the existing dwelling. Otherwise, it should demonstrate the appropriateness of the alternative approach.'

In terms of rear extensions, principle DG51 states:

'Rear extensions which are not visible from the street and do not negatively impact on neighbouring properties can be expressed in many forms, including by adopting a contemporary architectural approach. With reference to DG49, they should nevertheless have consideration for the character of the existing building and the relationship of the extension with the side boundaries and adjacent buildings and gardens'

With regard to loft conversions and roof extensions, Principle DG52 notes 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 proposed dormer windows would be sited to the properties south-eastern elevation/ roof slope. It is considered that this would be visually prominent within the context of the street scene with both views and prominence being increased by virtue of the properties elevated position as the topography rises up from street level.

The proposed dormer is considered to be of a boxed and bulky appearance which would not respect the existing roofline. It is considered that the dormer would sit uncomfortably between the double gable to the south-east elevation. The proposed dormer would likely detract from the existing double gable appearance and would span a significant amount of the roof slope. This would significantly alter the existing roof profile and would be in clear contravention to DG52 of the Design Guide.

New materials would also be introduced to the existing palette including a sheet lead finish as well as vertical lead projections. These are not considered to integrate or assimilate well with the existing dwelling and would likely exacerbate the overall bulky nature and appearance of the dormer. Furthermore, it is considered that this contrast would likely further add to the dormers visual prominence.

The Conservation Officer has also been consulted in response to the proposed development with their full comments viewable within the application case file. It was noted that the site makes a neutral contribution at present towards the setting of the nearby listed buildings. The proposed dormer was considered to impact the kinetic views from the grade II listed building named The Thatch which would detract from the traditional, rural character of the setting of the listed building. This would inflict less than substantial harm to the lower end of the scale towards The Thatch and at the very low end towards the listed buildings at Cobbs Mill. These comments are agreed with by the Case Officer.

It is considered that the proposed window alterations to the existing dwelling would result in a relatively contemporary appearance. However, these alterations would be carried out to less

visually prominent elevations and would not appear overly visually incongruous in their context. New proposed rooflights would also be added to the north-west and north-east roof slopes. Provided the existence of an existing rooflight to the north-western roofslope and that these additions would be small scale, thus allowing for the original roof slope to still be appreciated, on balance the proposed rooflights are considered to be acceptable.

Where the harm would be less than substantial, in terms of the NPPF, the criteria set out in paragraph 215 of that document would apply. This states that 'Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.' This is the balancing exercise that must be undertaken by the decision maker, ensuring that considerable importance and weight is given to the less than substantial harm to the heritage asset that has been identified.

The proposed development may create some local employment during the construction phase of the development, however this would only be at a localised level. There are not considered to be any further discernible public benefits arising from the scheme and the main benefits are considered to be private.

In light of the above, the proposed dormer would appear visually incongruous within the street scene and particularly within the context of the grade II listed building to the east. This would introduce a new and unattractive feature to the locality which would be visually prominent by virtue of its siting and proposed materials. The proposal would inflict less than substantial harm towards the identified listed buildings and would fail to comply with the provisions of DP26 and DP34 of the District Plan, DG49 and DG52 of the Design Guide and Paragraph 215 of the NPPF.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenities

In terms of impact upon neighbouring amenities, Policy DP26 in part 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 DP29);'

Principle DG47 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD relates to neighbouring amenities in terms of light and states:

'All dwellings should benefit from daylight and sunlight levels that conform to BRE (Better Regulation Executive) standards.'

Whilst the proposed dormer would increase the overall bulk and size of the property, it is considered that the dormer would have a sufficient separation distance from the nearest residential dwelling to the east to overcome a significant overbearing or overlooking impact.

A new rooflight would be added to the north-western roof slope which would face out towards the neighbouring site at Gardeners Cottage. The proposed rooflight would serve a W.C and would be positioned at a high level. Therefore, the rooflight would allow for further light to be supplied into the room rather than providing outlook. Accordingly, it is not considered that a significant overlooking impact would be incurred.

It is considered that the proposed development would not result in significant harm towards the amenities of the neighbouring dwellings. As such, the proposal would comply with DP26 of the District 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

The proposed development would introduce an incongruous and unattractive feature to a visually prominent position amongst the street scene. The proposed dormer would significantly alter the existing roof slope and would fail to integrate well into its surroundings. As such the proposal would inflict less than substantial harm towards the setting of the identified listed buildings which would not be outweighed by public benefits. As such, the proposal would fail to comply with DP26 and DP34 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, Principles DG49 and DG52 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide and Paragraphs 135 and 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Decision: Refusal

Case Officer: Stefan Galyas