

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/25/1232	Case Officer:	Stuart Malcolm
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	Proposed loft conversion with rear gable and side dormer.		
Site:	109 Grand Avenue, Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 8DG, , , ,		
Validation Date	12 May 2025	Overall Expiry Date:	5 Jun 2025
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	1 Jul 2025
Target Date:	7 Jul 2025	Recommending Officer Signature:	<i>Steven King</i>

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	0
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Signed and Agreed By:	<i>Stephen Ashdown</i>	Date:	1 Jul 2025
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/25/1232

**109 Grand Avenue, Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 8DG, , ,
Proposed loft conversion with rear gable and side dormer.
Martin Simpson**

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

None received

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

None

HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

Recommend approval.

INTRODUCTION

This application (DM/25/1232) seeks permission for a proposed loft conversion with rear gable and side dormer at 109 Grand Avenue Hassocks.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

There is no relevant planning history.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application site is a single storey link detached dwelling located in a residential setting close to the centre of Hassocks village. The surrounding properties are a mixture of designs and styles with most of the houses to the west being two storey and those to the east largely being single storey.

The nearest neighbours, and those most likely to be affected by the proposals, are located just beyond the boundary to the west at 107 Grand Avenue (a two storey house) and that to the east at 111 Grand Avenue (a bungalow) to which 109 is attached via the garage.

In policy terms the site is within the built up area of Hassocks.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The applicant intends to convert the loft space that will include adding a gable end at the rear and a dormer on the western side.

The dormer is flat roof in design and will include a high level window serving a new bedroom and a window to a new bathroom. A larger window is proposed to serve the new bedroom in the new rear gable end. On the eastern side, velux windows are proposed. One of these serves a further new bedroom which is located more centrally with this also being served by new velux on the western and southern roof slopes.

The overall height of the dwelling is not being increased. The applicant has stated that the dormer and gable extension will be tile-hung to match the existing roof tiles.

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, the Site Allocations Development Plan Document 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 in 2018. The most relevant policy is:

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.

Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan is made so forms part of the development plan. The most relevant policies are:

Policy 9: Character and 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 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.

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 is a material consideration. Paragraphs 8, 131 and 135 are considered to be particularly relevant to this application.

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 residential amenity; and
- Biodiversity net gain.

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."*

Policy 9 of the Neighbourhood Plan is a similar criteria based policy and states that:

"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."*

The Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD also provides advice for extensions to dwellings. Principle DG49 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 refers specifically to roof extensions and states:

"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. Further guidance on dormer windows and rooflights is provided in chapter 6 under sections 6.3.5 to 6.3.8."

In this case the size and scale of the extensions are in keeping with the existing house which, together with the size of the plot, can comfortably accommodate such a development of this scale.

The rear gable addition and insertion of velux rooflights are acceptable in design terms and have a limited impact on the character of the house and the surrounding area. The dormer however is of a design, incorporating a wholly flat roof, that would not normally be deemed visually appropriate. In this case however the dormer is on the side elevation and set back in the plot towards the rear half of the house and these factors help limit its visual impact, particularly when viewed from the public realm to the south. There are other loft conversions in the vicinity of the application site which have included flat roof dormers. There are two in particular a little to the east, at numbers 121 and 127 Grand Avenue, that have constructed comparable dormers in terms of their flat roof design and size on a side facing roofslope. In this case matching materials will be secured by condition which will help soften the appearance. Overall it is considered that the proposed dormer does not appear so out of keeping with the character of the surrounding area that permission should be refused for the development.

The proposal therefore complies with the development plan design policies and the principles of the Mid Sussex Design Guide.

In residential amenity terms, the test of development from Policy DP26 of the District Plan is whether or not it causes 'significant harm' to neighbouring amenity. Policy 9 of the Neighbourhood Plan however refers to development not causing '*unacceptable harm*' to residents.

In residential amenity terms, the test of development here is whether or not it causes '*unacceptable harm*' to neighbouring amenity as per Policy 9. 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. The '*unacceptable harm*' test of the Neighbourhood Plan adopted in 2020 is therefore the correct test to apply in this case.

The neighbour most likely to be affected is that to the west at 107 Grand Avenue given that the dormer is proposed on the north side of the existing house. There is also potential overlooking towards the neighbour at 111 to the east.

The size and scale of the dormer will not be overbearing or cause a loss of light but given there are new windows proposed within it then there is a potential for overlooking towards no. 107. However, the high level window serving the bedroom as shown on the plans can be restricted to have an internal cill height of 1.7 metres above floor level whilst the new bathroom window can be controlled to be fitted with

obscured glazing only. As such the proposal will not cause unacceptable harm through overlooking towards no.107.

There is also potential for overlooking from the new velux windows in the west and east facing roofslopes, particularly given the proximity to the two neighbouring properties. To negate this, a condition will be used that will restrict the internal cill height to 1.7 metres above finished floor level. At such a cill height, the proposal will not cause unacceptable harm through overlooking.

The gable element and other roof alterations, given the existing apex height of the roof is not being increased, will not cause unacceptable harm to either the neighbour at no. 107 or that at no. 111.

With the relevant conditions in places, the proposals will not cause unacceptable harm to any neighbours and overall the proposal falls short of the breaching the relevant policy test.

In regard to construction disruption, the applicant will be advised via informative of their responsibilities under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and the duty of care not to cause the neighbours of the site a nuisance.

Overall in residential amenity terms, the proposal accords with Policy 9 of the 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.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the proposal is acceptable in respect of its design and the impact on neighbouring residential amenity insofar as unacceptable harm cannot be demonstrated. As such the proposal accords with the requirements of Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, Policy 9 of the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan, the Mid Sussex Design Guide and the NPPF.

The application therefore accords with the development plan and there are no material planning considerations which indicate an alternative conclusion should be reached.

Planning permission should therefore be granted.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Stuart Malcolm