

From: planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk <planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 12 August 2026 14:32:22 UTC+01:00
To: "Caroline Grist" <caroline.grist@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: Mid Sussex DC - Online Register - Comments for Planning Application
DM/26/1265

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

Planning Application comments have been made. A summary of the comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 12/08/2026 2:32 PM.

Application Summary

Address:	38 Savill Road Lindfield Haywards Heath West Sussex RH16 2NX
Proposal:	Retrospective application for the construction of a two storey front extension and porch canopy, part ground floor part two storey rear extension, with associated alterations.
Case Officer:	Caroline Grist

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address:	22 Monks Meadow, Ardingly Ardingly Haywards Heath
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Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Neighbour or general public
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	
Comments:	I wish to object to the above retrospective planning application on the grounds that the development as constructed is materially different from the development previously approved under DM/24/2698 and, in its current form, is contrary to adopted planning policies concerning character, design and the appearance of the surrounding area. My objection is principally based upon Mid Sussex District Plan Policy DP26 - Character and Design, the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD, Principle DG49, and the relevant provisions of the

National Planning Policy Framework concerning good design.

1. The development as built is materially different from the approved design

Planning permission was granted under DM/24/2698 on 5 November 2024. The approved November 2024 elevations show a considerably more articulated design, including the pitched/gabled roof form to the front portion of the extension.

The May 2026 retrospective drawings show the development that has actually been constructed.

The difference is visually significant.

In particular, the approved design incorporated a pitched/gabled roof element, which helped to break up the mass of the extension and establish an architectural relationship with the existing dwelling.

The structure as built has instead adopted a much more substantial flat-roofed, rectangular/box-like form.

This is not simply a minor alteration to the approved scheme. The change materially affects the form, massing and architectural appearance of the building when viewed from the public realm.

The Council should therefore assess the development as it actually exists rather than treating the retrospective application as though it were merely a technical amendment to the approved scheme.

2. Conflict with Policy DP26 - Character and Design

Policy DP26 expressly applies to:

"alterations and extensions to existing buildings"

and requires them to be well designed and to reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages.

Among other requirements, DP26 requires development to:

- be of high quality design;
- address the character and scale of surrounding buildings and landscape; and
- protect valued townscapes and the separate identity and character of towns and villages.

In my view, the development as constructed fails these tests.

The large, flat-roofed front extension has a substantially more dominant and visually heavy appearance than the approved design. Rather than appearing as a sympathetic extension of the original dwelling, it reads as a large rectangular structure attached to it.

This is particularly apparent from the front elevation and from views along Savill Road.

The resulting form does not successfully integrate the extension with the original house or the established residential character of the street.

3. Conflict with Principle DG49 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide

The conflict with DG49 is particularly clear.

The Council's Design Guide states that extensions should respond to the design of the original dwelling and should normally be well integrated with its existing scale, form and massing, allowing the original building to remain the dominant element. It further states that extensions should typically use simple,

uncomplicated forms which complement and coordinate with the original dwelling.

The approved scheme achieved this to a substantially greater degree because the pitched/gabled roof form provided a clear architectural relationship with the original house.

The development as built has removed this important element and replaced it with a much more horizontal and visually dominant flat-roofed form.

The result is that the extension now appears to compete with, rather than complement, the original dwelling.

I therefore consider the development to be contrary to the specific design principles contained within DG49.

4. The flat roof materially increases the visual mass of the extension

The issue is not simply whether a flat roof is acceptable in principle.

A contemporary or flat-roofed extension can clearly be acceptable in an appropriate context. However, DG49 makes clear that a contemporary approach should take its cues from the existing building and requires a high-quality design response.

In this case, the change from the approved roof arrangement to the constructed flat roof has produced a substantially more monolithic and box-like appearance.

The front extension is consequently much more conspicuous in the streetscape.

The visual effect is exacerbated by the scale of the extension and its position at the front of the property, where it is readily visible from the public highway.

5. Harm to the character and appearance of Savill Road

The Council's Design Guide specifically recognises that the design of extensions can have an impact beyond the individual property and should be informed by local character.

The concern here is therefore not simply a personal dislike of the building.

The issue is that the constructed form makes an identifiable and adverse contribution to the public appearance of the street.

The original approved design was more sympathetic to the architectural form of the dwelling and better integrated the addition into the property.

The as-built form is visually much heavier and more obviously an addition.

I therefore consider that the development causes harm to the character and appearance of the immediate streetscape.

6. The original approval is an important comparison

The Council has already assessed this property and granted permission for a particular design.

I appreciate that the retrospective application must be assessed on its own planning merits and that the fact it is retrospective cannot, in itself, be a reason for refusal.

However, the existence of the previous permission is highly relevant because it provides a direct and objective comparison between:

(a) the form which MSDC previously considered acceptable; and
(b) the substantially different form which has actually been constructed.

The Council's own enforcement guidance confirms that retrospective applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan and cannot be prejudiced simply because they are retrospective. It also specifically recognises the issue of development being carried out other than in accordance with approved plans.

My objection is therefore not that the application is retrospective as such. It is that the development for which retrospective permission is now sought has materially different design characteristics from the development previously approved and does not satisfy the relevant design policies.

7. National Planning Policy Framework

The current NPPF reinforces the importance of good design.

Paragraph 131 states that the creation of high-quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to the planning process.

Paragraph 135 requires development to be, amongst other things, visually attractive as a result of good architecture and to respond appropriately to its surroundings.

Most importantly, paragraph 139 states that development that is not well designed should be refused, particularly where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design. The current development should therefore be assessed against both the Council's adopted local design policies and its adopted Design Guide.

8. The retrospective application should not simply regularise an unacceptable design

The Government's Planning Practice Guidance makes clear that a retrospective application must be considered in the normal way and that permission cannot be assumed simply because the work has already been undertaken.

This is particularly important in this case because the applicant has already constructed a materially different form from that which was approved.

Granting permission retrospectively would effectively legitimise a design which, in my view, represents a clear deterioration in architectural quality when compared with the previously approved scheme.

The Council should instead consider whether the harm can be remedied by requiring the development to be brought into accordance with an acceptable design.

9. Conclusion

For the reasons above, I respectfully request that planning permission be refused for DM/26/1265.

The principal reasons are:

1. The development as constructed materially differs from the previously approved scheme under DM/24/2698.
 2. The replacement of the approved pitched/gabled roof form with the substantially more dominant flat-roofed form materially harms
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the appearance and architectural integrity of the dwelling.

3. The development fails to respond satisfactorily to the design of the original dwelling.
4. The scale, form and massing of the extension do not satisfactorily integrate with the original building.
5. The development conflicts with Policy DP26 - Character and Design.
6. The development conflicts with Principle DG49 - General principles for extensions of the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD.
7. The development is inconsistent with the design objectives of the NPPF, particularly paragraphs 131, 135 and 139.

I respectfully ask the Council to refuse retrospective permission and to consider whether appropriate enforcement action should be taken to secure a development which more closely reflects the previously approved design.

Kind regards