

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/26/0213	Case Officer:	Katherine Williams
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	Proposed internal alterations and alterations to rear external door.		
Site:	Heathfield House, High Street, Cuckfield, West Sussex, RH17 5JU, , ,		
Validation Date	28 Jan 2026	Overall Expiry Date:	6 Jul 2026
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	20 Jul 2026
Target Date:	25 Mar 2026	Recommending Officer Signature:	<i>Katherine Williams</i>

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	0
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Signed and Agreed By:	<i>Steven King</i>	Date:	21 Jul 2026
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/26/0213

**Heathfield House, High Street, Cuckfield, West Sussex, RH17 5JU, ,
Proposed internal alterations and alterations to rear external door.
Ms Rachel Bryant**

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

None received

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

Conservation Officer - No objection following changes to the proposal

PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

No objection

INTRODUCTION

The application seeks planning permission for internal alterations, and alterations to rear external door.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

09/03338/LBC - 2 x sets of Non illuminated individual text and logo on locators. Granted
09/03349/ADV - 2 x sets of Non illuminated individual text and logo on locators. Granted
11/00176/LBC - Installation of new suspended ceiling and lighting scheme, paint decoration to walls like for like. Replacement on retail display fixture, relocation of handrail on staircase. Granted
DM/25/2857 - Proposed part change of use of the ground floor shop to residential, removal of a 1970's rear flat roof extension, minor alterations internally, and change of external building colour. Granted
DM/25/2942 - Proposed part change of use of the ground floor shop to residential, removal of a 1970's rear flat roof extension, minor alterations internally, and change of external building colour. Granted
DM/26/0156 - Proposed internal alterations and alterations to rear external door. Under Consideration

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application property is located on the western side of High Street and the roundabout with Broad Street, within the built up area and Conservation Area of Cuckfield. The property is also within an Archaeological Notification Area and within the setting of a number of listed buildings, including Marshalls a Grade II* manor house, High Street a Grade II listed building, and No.s 2-5 High Street Grade II listed buildings.

The property consists of a Grade II listed building dating back to the mid 19th century and extends over four floors, including a basement, with a ground floor shop (Use Class E) and a residential property. The shop unit northern side of the ground floor with the southern half being granted planning permission (DM/25/2857) to become part of the residential property, and was granted to be used as a utility room and study.

The property is located within the village centre of Cuckfield and contributes to the existing character and commercial centre of Cuckfield. The property is located within a prominent position within the streetscene due to its position opposite the roundabout with Broad Street along with the significantly greater height of the building to neighbouring properties and its teal colour render finish of the building.

The property is constructed in painted render, white timber fenestration and slate roof tiles.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The proposal has been amended following its submission and has removed the previously proposed solar panels and reduced internal alterations.

The proposed internal alterations include using the southern portion of the ground floor of building as a kitchen and dining area. This includes a wider opening from the kitchen into the hall and removal of the internal walls between the dining area and the hall. To the rear the existing door to the garden would be replaced by French doors.

To first floor the existing kitchen would become a study.

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 DPD and Cuckfield 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

DP35 - Conservation Area

DP38 - Biodiversity

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.

Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan (made October 2014)

Relevant policies:

CNP1 - Design of New Development and Conservation

CNP4 - Protect and Enhance Biodiversity

Other Planning 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
DPN2 - Biodiversity Net Gain
DPB1 - Character and Design
DPB2 - Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets
DPB3 - Conservation Area

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)

National Planning Policy Guidance

ASSESSMENT

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

- Design and Impact on the Conservation Area and Listed Building
- Impact on neighbouring properties
- Biodiversity Net Gain

Design and Impact on the Conservation Area and Listed Building

S.66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states:

'In considering whether to grant planning permission 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.'

S.72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states:

'In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any powers under any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.'

Paras 205, 212-215 of the NPPF state:

'205. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

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 DP34 of the District Plan is relevant and states:

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

- *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;*
- *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;*
- *Traditional building materials and construction techniques are normally used. The installation of uPVC windows and doors will not be acceptable;*
- *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;*
- *Special regard is given to protecting the setting of a listed building;*
- *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.'*

Mid Sussex District Plan policy DP35 states:

'Development in a conservation area will be required to conserve or enhance its special character, appearance and the range of activities which contribute to it. This will be achieved by ensuring that:

- *New buildings and extensions are sensitively designed to reflect the special characteristics of the area in terms of their scale, density, design and through the use of complementary materials;*
- *Open spaces, gardens, landscaping and boundary features that contribute to the special character of the area are protected. Any new landscaping or boundary features are designed to reflect that character;*
- *Traditional shop fronts that are a key feature of the conservation area are protected. Any alterations to shopfronts in a conservation area will only be permitted where they do not result in the loss of a traditional shopfront and the new design is sympathetic to the character of the existing building and street scene in which it is located;*
- *Existing buildings that contribute to the character of the conservation area are protected. Where demolition is permitted, the replacement buildings are of a design that reflects the special characteristics of the area;*
- *Activities such as markets, crafts or other activities which contribute to the special character and appearance of the conservation area are supported;*
- *New pavements, roads and other surfaces reflect the materials and scale of the existing streets and surfaces in the conservation area.*

Development will also protect the setting of the conservation area and in particular views into and out of the area.

New buildings of outstanding or innovative design may be acceptable in conservation areas provided that their impact would not cause material harm to the area.'

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.'*

Principle DG11 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide states: *'Heritage assets and historic landscapes should be celebrated, enhanced and preserved where appropriate, for the enjoyment of existing and future residents. Where appropriate and providing it does not cause harm to the heritage assets or their setting, they should be carefully integrated into development proposals as they help to reinforce a sense of place and local identity.*

Elsewhere new development should generally reflect the scale of adjacent areas and the settlement context within which it is located to deliver a coherent and consistent urban fabric. There may be potential to introduce a new character / development form and massing:

- *On larger urban extensions; this will typically be within the middle of the site and associated with a new neighbourhood centre, spine road or the main open space.*
- *In town centre locations defined as coarse grain areas and nearby sites identified on the brownfield sites register.'*

Policy CNP1 of the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan states:

'New development in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan will be permitted where it:

a) Is designed to a high quality which responds to the heritage and distinctive character and reflects the identity of the local context of Cuckfield as defined on Map 3 - Conservation Areas and Character Areas, by way of;

i. height, scale, spacing, layout, orientation, design and materials of buildings,

ii. the scale, design and materials of the public realm (highways, footways, open space and landscape), and

b) Is sympathetic to the setting of any heritage asset and

c) Follows guidance in the Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans, the High Weald AONB Management Plan, and

- d) *Respects the natural contours of a site and protects and sensitively incorporates natural features such as trees, hedges and ponds within the site, and*
- e) *Creates safe, accessible and well-connected environments that meet the needs of users, and*
- f) *Will not result in unacceptable levels of light, noise, air or water pollution, and*
- g) *Makes best use of the site to accommodate development.'*

The Council's Conservation Officer has been consulted on the application and has provided the following final comments following the amendments to the proposal:

'The proposal has been amended to show the historic floor plan to the southern part of the ground floor of the building retained, with the modern partition in the rear room removed, and double doors inserted to the wall between the front room and hallway. A pair of French doors are also proposed to the rear elevation. The originally proposed PV panels at roof level are omitted.

As revised, the proposal is considered to preserve the special interest of the listed building and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. This meets the requirements of District Plan Policies DP34 and DP35 and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.

Details of the proposed new internal and external doors have been provided and are considered acceptable. I have no further suggested conditions.'

The proposed alterations would be largely internal, with the replacement rear French doors being the only external change to the building, which would not be visible from public views, and would therefore not have an impact on the streetscene or the character of the Conservation Area. The changes to the building are considered to be of a size, form and design that would be proportional and appropriate to the character and special interest of the listed building.

Officers therefore agree with the comment made by the Conservation Officer and subject to suitable conditions, the proposal would not have an impact on the character and appearance of the area or the special interest of the listed building conserve the character of the Conservation Area.

Impact on neighbouring properties

Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 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 Policy DP29);'*

To the northern side is Marshalls, which is set away from the application property with its driveway in between. On the southern side is No. 45 High Street, which is attached to the application property through its northern side elevation. The rear elevation of this property extends beyond rear elevation of the application property.

The proposal would consist of largely of internal alterations and alterations to the ground floor rear fenestration. Given the nature of the proposal, it is considered that it would not cause harm to the amenities of the neighbouring properties.

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 considered to be appropriate in terms of the impact to the listed buildings and would conserve the character of the Conservation Area; and would not cause harm the amenities of neighbouring properties. Therefore, the proposal complies with Mid Sussex District Plan policies, DP26,

DP34, and DP35, policies CNP1 and CNP4 Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan, the relevant provisions of the NPPF, and the Listed Building and Conservation Area (LBCA) Act 1990. The application is therefore recommended for approval.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Katherine Williams