

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/25/1854	Case Officer:	Catherine Cardin
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	Proposed loft conversion.		
Site:	16 Ash Grove, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 4PZ, , , ,		
Validation Date	31 Jul 2025	Overall Expiry Date:	26 Aug 2025
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	18 Sep 2025
Target Date:	25 Sep 2025	Recommending Officer Signature:	<i>Catherine Cardin</i>

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	0
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Signed and Agreed By:	<i>Joanne Fisher</i>	Date:	18 Sep 2025
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/25/1854

**16 Ash Grove, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 4PZ, , ,
Proposed loft conversion.
Mr And Mrs Parker**

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

None received.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

None received.

TOWN COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

No comment.

INTRODUCTION

Planning permission is sought for a loft conversion and rear dormers.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

04/01507/FUL- Single storey rear extension. Permission. DM/17/2555- Two storey side extension with extension of hipped roof over and a single storey rear extension (Amended plans received 4 October 2017).

DM/25/1177- Proposed loft conversion. Refused.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application relates to 16 Ash Grove, a semi-detached two-storey dwelling featuring a hipped roof and front gable end presenting to the roadside. The existing dwelling is constructed of red facing brickwork walls with clay tile hanging at first floor level, a plain tile roof and white upvc windows. The property is set back from the roadside by a brick paved driveway. The property has previously been extended through a two-storey addition to the side (southern) elevation and a single-storey addition to the rear elevation. The property benefits from garden amenity space to the rear.

The sites locality displays a number of estate style dwellings of a traditional appearance located within a cul de sac. There is some visual variance contributed towards the street scene through a variety of bungalows, semi-detached dwellings and detached dwellings. Some properties are set back from the highway by front driveways and grass verges. Several dwellings appear to have been extended and modified to the side, front and rear elevations. With regard to policy constraints, the site is located within the built-up area of Haywards Heath. Neighbouring properties are located to the north, south and west. The highway is located to the east.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The application seeks to convert the loft and install two rear dormers.

The proposed northern rear dormer would measure some 2.5 metres in width. The proposed southern rear dormer would measure some 2.7 metres in width. The dormers would have a depth of some 2.7 metres. The dormers would have flat roofs, with a maximum height of some 2.5 metres.

It is also proposed to install no.3 rooflights to the front elevation. Finally, it is also proposed the replace the windows on the first-floor rear (western) elevation.

All proposed external materials 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 Haywards Heath 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

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

Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan made in 2016.

Relevant policies:
Policy E9 - Design
Policy H9 - Residential Extensions

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.

Relevant policies:
DPS2 - Sustainable Design and Construction
DPB1 - Character and Design

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;

- Design and Character
- Neighbouring Amenities
- Biodiversity Net Gain

Design and Character

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 E9 of the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan relates to design and states that:

'Developers must demonstrate how their proposal will protect and reinforce the local character within the locality of the site. This will include having regard to the following design elements:

- o height, scale, spacing, layout, orientation, design and materials of buildings,*
- o the scale, design and materials of the development (highways, footways, open space and landscape), and is sympathetic to the setting of any heritage asset,*
- o respects the natural contours of a site and protects and sensitively incorporates natural features such as trees, hedges and ponds within the site,*
- o creates safe, accessible and well-connected environments that meet the needs of users,*
- o Will not result in unacceptable levels of light, noise, air or water pollution,*
- o Makes best use of the site to accommodate development,*
- o Car parking is designed and located so that it fits in with the character of the proposed development. Proposals affecting a listed building, conservation area, building of local interest or public park of historic interest or their setting should preserve or enhance their special interest and/or distinctive character.'*

Policy H9 of the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan relates to extensions and states that:

'Extensions to existing dwellings will be permitted where it meets the following criteria: o The scale, height and form fit unobtrusively with the existing building and the character of the street scene.'

- o Spacing between buildings would respect the character of the street scene.*
- o Gaps which provide views out to surrounding countryside are maintained.*
- o Materials are compatible with the materials of the existing building.*
- o The traditional boundary treatment of an area is retained and, where feasible reinforced.*
- o The privacy, daylight, sunlight and outlook of adjoining residents are safeguarded.'*

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.'

The Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD also provides advice for loft conversions and roof extensions. Principle DG52 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.'

Section 6, Paragraph 6.3.6 states: *'Dormer windows should be visually subordinate to the roof slope, enabling a large proportion of the main roof to remain visible. Excessively wide dormers are likely to look unsatisfactory as they will often be out of proportion with the existing roof.'*

The application property is located within a residential area of Haywards Heath. Whilst there is some variation within the design of these properties, they are generally set back from the highway and have a traditional appearance.

An initial planning application for a roof conversion and hip to gable extension was refused under planning application DM/25/1177. This was due to the proposed rear box dormer appearing excessively wide, and significant changes proposed to the roof form which would unbalance the pair of semi-detached properties. The current proposal has removed the hip to gable extension and split the rear box dormer in two. Furthermore, the current proposal was amended after concerns were raised regarding the height of the dormers from the ridge. In addition, concerns were also raised regarding the scale of the proposed dormers. Whilst the concerns regarding the scale of the dormers were not responded to, on balance, given the limited views of the dormers from the streetscene, and the existing boxed rear dormer at no.19 Ash Grove, it is not considered that the harm caused to the character and appearance of the area would be enough to warrant the refusal of this application. In terms of the impact to the existing dwelling, it is considered that the dormers are of an acceptable scale and would be appropriately positioned on the rear roof pitch. It is considered that the proposed materials to match the existing would provide a consistent finish.

Regarding the proposed rooflights to the front roof pitch, as there are already rooflights at no.2, no.7, no.19 and no.20 Ash Grove it is considered that rooflights on the front elevation form part of the character and appearance of the area and therefore this aspect of the proposal is not considered to cause significant harm to the streetscene.

Accordingly, the proposal is considered to comply with the provisions of DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, and policies H9 and E9 of the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan in terms of character and design.

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'*. Policy H9 in the Neighbourhood Plan refers to *'The privacy, daylight, sunlight and outlook of adjoining residents are safeguarded.'* As such there is some conflict between the two policies.

Under section 38(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 if a policy contained in a development plan for an area conflict 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. As such, policy DP26 of the District Plan is considered to take precedence and therefore the test in this instance is whether the development causes significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents.

Given the scale of the rear dormers, it is not considered that the amenities of neighbours would be affected by the proposed works. The proposed rooflights to the front roof pitch are considered to provide light and not outlook, therefore it is not considered that the amenities of neighbours would be affected by this aspect of the proposal.

Due to the residential nature of the proposed development there would not be any significant harm regarding privacy, noise, air or light pollution.

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, and would not cause harm to the amenities of neighbouring properties.

In conclusion, the proposal would accord with the requirements of policies DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, and policies E9 and H9 of the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan. It is therefore considered acceptable.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Catherine Cardin