

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/25/1523	Case Officer:	Stefan Galyas
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	Proposed loft conversion and roof changes with introduction of dutch gables		
Site:	7 Fairlawn Drive, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 1NR, , , ,		
Validation Date	11 Jun 2025	Overall Expiry Date:	7 Jul 2025
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	1 Aug 2025
Target Date:	6 Aug 2025	Recommending Officer Signature:	<i>Stefan Galyas</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 Aug 2025
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/25/1523

**7 Fairlawn Drive, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 1NR, , ,
Proposed loft conversion and roof changes with introduction of dutch gables
Mr And Mrs D Callin**

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

There were no letters of representation received in response to the proposed development.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

There were no consultee comments received.

TOWN COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

Town Council: No response received.

INTRODUCTION

The application seeks planning permission for a proposed loft conversion featuring a rear dormer, alterations to include two side Dutch gables at roof level and the addition of a roof light to the front roof pitch.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

14/02191/FUL - Two storey side extension on the site of existing single storey garage. Permission.

DM/24/2478 - Proposed loft conversion and roof extension with roof light windows to front elevation and double dormer to rear elevation. Refusal 28.11.24.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application relates to number 7 Fairlawn Drive, a detached two storey dwelling featuring a hipped roof and front gable end presenting to the roadside. The property has previously been extended through a two-storey addition to the side (eastern) elevation and has a front (north) lean to porch. The existing dwelling is composed of facing brickwork walls with clay tile hanging at first floor level, a concrete tiled roof and uPVC windows. The property is set back from the roadside by a tiled driveway and some front garden amenity space set behind a low-level brick built boundary wall. The site is linear in plot form and is afforded ample garden amenity space to the rear which slopes slightly upwards with regards to the site's topography.

The sites locality displays a number of estate style dwellings of a traditional appearance with some visual variance contributed towards the street scene through varied roof pitches. Several dwellings appear to have been extended and modified to both the side and rear elevations along the southern side of Fairlawn Drive.

With regard to policy constraints, the site is located within the built-up area for East Grinstead.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The proposal would develop a rear dormer at loft level which would measure at circa 2.7m in length, 4.6m wide and 2.1m high. Proposed external materials would comprise weatherboarding to the dormer cheeks, a single ply flat roof membrane roof and uPVC windows.

Additionally, the proposal would contribute towards further roof space through the addition of Dutch gables to either side (east and west) roof slope. A roof light to the principal (north) elevation would also help accommodate the loft conversion.

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 East Grinstead 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

East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan (Made November 2016)

Relevant Policies:

Policy EG3 - Promoting Good Design

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 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:

DPS1 - Climate Change

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 2023)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023 is a material consideration. Paragraphs 2, 8, 11, 38, 47, 114-116, 131, 135 & 139.

National Design Guide (Published January 2021)

ASSESSMENT

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

- Character and Appearance
- Impact on Neighbouring Properties
- Biodiversity Net Gain

Design and Character

DP26 of the District Plan, in part, 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"*

Policy EG3 of the East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan seeks to promote good design through the following measures:

- a) The form of the proposed development is proportionate and in keeping with the scale, height, materials and site coverage of the surrounding area;*
- b) The layout of the proposed development respects the topography and character of the site, protects important landscape features and does not harm adjoining amenity;*
- c) The proposal does not result in the loss of buildings or spaces that would have an unacceptable impact on the character of the area;*
- d) The proposal ensures satisfactory means of access for vehicles and pedestrians and provides adequate parking, cycle storage and refuse facilities on site;*
- e) The design of new buildings and the layout of spaces, including footways, car and cycle parking areas, should be permeable and provide connectivity with neighbouring areas;*
- f) New development must be inclusive and where appropriate make satisfactory provision for the safe and easy access for those with mobility impairment; and*

- g) *The design of new developments must result in the creation of a safe and secure environment and incorporate adequate security measures and features to deter crime, fear of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour; and*
- h) *Proposals make provision for green infrastructure and biodiversity enhancement..*

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.'

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.

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 National Design Guide (2021) states in Paragraph 44 that:

"to communicate the benefits of a scheme, it is important to explain how the design of a development relates to context and local character." It adds that

"well-designed places and buildings are influenced positively by:

- o The history and heritage of the site, its surroundings and the wider area, including cultural influences;*
- o The significance and setting of heritage assets and any other specific features that merit conserving and enhancing;*
- o The local vernacular, including historical building typologies such as the terrace, town house, mews, villa or mansion block, the treatment of facades, characteristic materials and details" (Paragraph 46).*

The previous appeal decision against the refusal under DM/24/2478 noted that the existing dormers at both No.5 and 9 either side form the application dwellings immediate context and carry significant weight in the appraisal in the assessment of a rear dormer proposal at the application site. As such, the previous dormer was found to be acceptable whilst the hip to gable alterations were found to inflict harm towards the character and appearance of the original property.

Whilst the existing property has previously been extended to the side (east) elevation through the addition of a two-storey extension, it is considered that the original dwellings hipped roof pitch is still largely in place. When compared to the previously proposed dormer, the current application has reduced the width of the dormer from circa 5.9m to 4.6m. As such, the proposed dormer is considered to have an acceptable appearance given its immediate context and significant weight should be afforded to the conclusions as set out within the previous appeal decision in this instance.

In relation to the existing ridge height, the maximum height would not be exceeded however further space at attic level would be incorporated through dutch gables to both side (east and west) roof slopes. It is considered that similar dutch gables have been used throughout the streetscene, albeit along the principal elevation and more so as a decorative design feature. Nevertheless, it is not considered that the proposed dutch gables would appear as an overly incongruous feature within the street scene and would be acceptable in this instance.

The proposal has also been revised from the previous scheme from two roof lights to a singular central roof light along the principal (north) roof pitch. Whilst the rooflights would not be entirely flush with the principal roof pitch, it is considered that their protrusion would be minimal and not considered to significantly alter the existing roof profile.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policy DP26 of the District Plan and Policy EG3 of the East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan.

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);'*

The proposed dutch gables would increase the existing dwellings overall size and scale by a limited amount. The existing separation distance between the application property and the nearby neighbours is considered to be sufficient in overcoming a significant overbearing impact.

With regard to overlooking, it is considered that the proposed dormer windows to the rear elevation would face out towards the existing garden amenity space. Views towards the neighbouring garden amenity spaces would be restricted to obscure angles and would not likely result in a direct overlooking impact.

Accordingly, the proposal is considered to comply with the provisions of DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan in terms of neighbouring amenities.

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

In conclusion, the proposal is appropriate in terms of design and will not negatively impact on the host dwelling nor its immediate setting and will not harm neighbouring amenities.

The proposal will comply with Policy DP26 of the District Plan, Policy EG3 of the East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan and the requirements of the NPPF.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Stefan Galyas