

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/25/2797	Case Officer:	Hamish Evans
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	Proposed two-storey side extension and replacement single storey rear extension		
Site:	14 Woods Hill Close, Ashurst Wood, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 3RJ, , ,		
Validation Date	30 Oct 2025	Overall Expiry Date:	24 Nov 2025
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	3 Dec 2025
Target Date:	25 Dec 2025	Recommending Officer Signature:	Hamish Evans

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	2
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Signed and Agreed By:	Stephen Ashdown	Date:	4 Dec 2025
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/25/2797

**14 Woods Hill Close, Ashurst Wood, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 3RJ, ,
Proposed two-storey side extension and replacement single storey rear extension
Mr And Mrs Porter**

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

Two third-party letters of representation have been received in respect of this application. One letter writes in support of the proposal and states that the design looks nice and is not obtrusive. One letter objects to the proposal as a proposed window and door would face 59 Hammerwood Road, the front extension would reduce the parking spaces at the site, impact on birds, removal of asbestos at the site might contaminate neighbouring sites and that there are no details of maintenance works.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

MSDC Tree Officer

No objection subject to conditions.

Southern Water

No objection subject to conditions.

PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

Ashurst Wood Parish Council

No objection.

INTRODUCTION

The application seeks planning permission for a two-storey and single storey side extension and a replacement single storey rear extension at 14 Woods Hill Close, Ashurst Wood.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None considered relevant.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application site is located within the built up area boundary of Ashurst Wood and the High Weald Area Outstanding Natural Beauty. The site consists of a semi-detached residential property that is characterised by brown bare brick, brown clay hanging tile and white horizontal board clad walls, brown clay roof tiles and white uPVC window and door frames. There are some three off-street parking spaces at the site, one within an existing garage and two to the front of the existing dwelling. Residential properties are located to the north, south, east and west of the site, Woods Hill Close is located to the northeast of the site. The surrounding area is residential in its nature with a mix of semi-detached and detached residential properties that are characterised by similar external materials as the application site.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The application seeks planning permission for a two-storey and single storey side extension and a replacement single storey rear extension at 14 Woods Hill Close, Ashurst Wood.

The proposed two-storey element of the side extension measures some 3.2 metres in width, 8.2 metres in depth, an eaves height of 3.0 metres and a total height of 6.6 metres. The proposed single storey element would measure some 0.8 metres in width, 3.9 metres in depth, an eaves height of 2.3 metres and a total height of 3.8 metres. The proposed side extension would replace an existing single storey side enlargement which includes a garage, storeroom. The proposed side extension also includes a front and rear dormer, the rear one measures some 1.9 metres in width, 1.6 metres in depth and it would measure some 1.2 metres in height. The proposed front dormer measures some 1.9 metres in width, 2.2 metres in depth and it would measure some 1.6 metres in height. The proposed replacement single storey rear extension measures some 7.2 metres in width, 3.4 metres in depth, an eaves height of 2.9 metres and a total height of 3.2 metres. The proposed works are to be characterised by external materials similar in appearance to those used in the existing dwelling.

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 Ashurst Wood 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:

DP16 - High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

DP21 - Transport

DP26 - Character and Design

DP37 - Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

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.

Ashurst Wood Neighbourhood Plan

The Ashurst Wood Neighbourhood Plan was adopted June 2016.

Relevant policies:

ASW14 - Design and Character

ASW21 - Parking Provision

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:

DPN4: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
DPC4: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
DPB1: Character and Design
DPT4: Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure

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 High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2024-2029

ASSESSMENT

Character and Appearance

Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex 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:

- *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.'*

A similar ethos for design and character is contained within policy ASW14 of the Ashurst Wood Neighbourhood Plan.

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.'*

Principle DG50 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide states: *'Front and side extensions are typically visible from the public realm and will be resisted where they have an adverse impact on the street scene or the appearance of a dwelling.'*

Side extensions should normally be subservient to the original dwelling and typically be set-back from the front of the house to help define the original building. The gaps between dwellings can sometimes positively contribute to articulating (for example, through the consistent rhythm of repeated houses) and adding interest in a street frontage or by providing views / visible connections to the surrounding countryside. Side extensions will therefore need to appropriately respond to the character of the street form and will not normally be accepted where they close an important gap and view.'

Principle DG51 specifically relates to rear extensions and states that *'rear extensions which are not visible from the street and do not negatively impact on neighbouring properties can be expressed in many forms, including by adopting a contemporary architectural approach. With reference to DG49, they should nevertheless have consideration for the character of the existing building and the relationship of the extension with the side boundaries and adjacent buildings and gardens.'*

Principle DG52 relates to loft conversions and roof extensions and 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. Further guidance on dormer windows and rooflights is provided in chapter 6 under sections 6.3.5 to 6.3.8.'*

Section 6.3.5 to 6.3.8 states:

'6.3.5 While dormer windows can sometimes be prominent features in the streetscene, care needs to be taken with their design, proportions and position on the roof. The choice of design should be informed by the character and appearance of the local vernacular.'

6.3.6 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.'

6.3.7 Dormer windows should normally be positioned below the ridge-line, and above the eaves line.'

6.3.8 Rooflights that follow the roof profile can be an appropriate substitute for a dormer where it is important to retain the profile of the roof slope or avoid a dormer that break the eaves line. Care though needs to be taken to avoid them dominating the roof. Rooflights are best designed with a slender-profile that are flush with the roof slope.'

It has been shown that the proposed external materials will be similar in appearance to those used in the existing dwelling, details of which can be secured by a suitably worded condition.

The proposed extensions are subservient in height to the existing dwelling and the proposed extensions would be similar in appearance to the existing dwelling. The proposed side extension includes a front and rear facing dormer both of which are modestly sized and would enable the majority of the roof slope to remain visible. The proposed front dormer would be set above the eaves and below the ridge and the proposed rear dormer would be set below the ridge and it would be within the eaves. The proposed replacement rear extension would be of a similar scale and design to the existing extension it is to replace. The proposed side extension is suitably subordinate to the existing dwelling and it is not considered to close an important gap between dwellings.

As such the proposed works are considered to address the character and scale of the existing and surrounding buildings. The existing highways access will remain unchanged and the resulting parking arrangement is to be considered in a subsequent section of this report. As such it is considered to comply with policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, policy ASW14 of the Ashurst Wood Neighbourhood Plan and principles DG49, DG50, DG51 and DG52 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide.

Impact on the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The legal framework for AONBs, (also known as National Landscapes) in England and Wales is provided by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW) 2000 which at Section 82 reaffirms the primary purpose of AONBs: to conserve and enhance natural beauty. Section 84 of the CRoW requires Local Planning Authorities to 'take all such action as appears to them expedient for accomplishment of the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB'. The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act (2023) amended section 85 of the CRoW Act, to create a new duty on relevant authorities to 'seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area' when discharging their functions in AONBs'. A similar ethos is found within The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan which is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications in the AONB.

Policy DP16 of the District Plan requires proposals in the AONB to conserve or enhance natural beauty.

Paragraph 189 of the NPPF is also relevant. This states in part that:

'Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.'

The proposed works are relatively modest in their nature and their design, scale and character are considered to address the character and appearance of the surrounding area. As such it would not have any adverse impact on the landscape quality of the AONB and the complies with the requirements of policy DP16 of the District Plan, High Weald AONB Management Plan 2024-2029 and paragraph 189 of the NPPF.

Transport

Policy DP21 of the Mid Sussex District Plan in part states:

'The scheme provides adequate car parking for the proposed development taking into account the accessibility of the development, the type, mix and use of the development and the availability and opportunities for public transport; and with the relevant Neighbourhood Plan where applicable;'

Policy ASW21 of the Ashurst Wood Neighbourhood Plan and the West Sussex County Council Parking Guidance for New Developments require three off-street parking spaces be provided for a dwelling of this size.

The existing two parking spaces to the front of the dwelling are to be retained and the one parking space within the existing garage is to be removed. As such there would be some two off-street parking spaces at the dwelling. Whilst it is noted that this would be below the requirements set out above there are no parking restrictions within Woods Hill Close and similar parking arrangements are seen within the surrounding area. Taking into account the above the application is considered

to comply with policy DP21 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, policy ASW21 of the Ashurst Wood Neighbourhood Plan and the West Sussex County Council September 2020 Parking Guidance.

A third-party representation letter has been received which objects to the proposal in part due to the loss of parking at the site. Whilst this is noted, the plans demonstrate that two off-street parking space can be retained and for the above reasons the resulting parking arrangement is considered to be acceptable.

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 Policy DP29);'

A similar ethos is contained within the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD.

Policy ASW14 of the Neighbourhood Plan requires *'the living conditions of adjoining residents (including privacy, daylight, sunlight and outlook) are safeguarded'*.

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. As such, policy DP26 of the MSDP is considered to take precedence and therefore the test in this instance is whether the development causes significant harm to neighbouring amenities as outlined above.

The proposed rear extension would be of a similar scale to the existing extension and it would be of a modest single storey nature. The proposed two-storey element of the side extension would be some 0.9 metres away from the eastern boundary of the site. The ground level of the dwelling to the east of the site is some 2.0 metres higher than the application site. It does not include any first-floor side facing windows. The proposed single storey element of the side extension is relatively modest in its height and it would not significantly exceed the height of the existing garage it is to replace or the ground level of the site to the east. The proposed front and side facing openings would not have direct views into neighbouring properties amenity spaces. The proposed rear facing openings would have similar views to the existing rear facing openings and there are significant trees to the rear of the site.

Taking into account the above it is considered that the proposal would not cause significant harm to the amenities of nearby residents including taking account of the impact on overlooking and loss of privacy, reduction in sunlight and daylight and a loss of outlook. The proposal is therefore, considered to comply with the above-mentioned part of policy DP26 and the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD.

A third-party representation letter has been received which objects to the proposal in part due to overlooking for the site to number 59 Hammerwood Road. However, given the above assessment the proposed extensions are not considered to cause significant harm to the amenities of nearby residents including in relation to overlooking.

Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

Policy DP37 of the Mid Sussex District Plan in part states:

'The District Council will support the protection and enhancement of trees, woodland and hedgerows, and encourage new planting. In particular, ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees will be protected.'

The proposed works do not include the removal or felling of any existing trees. The Tree Officer raises no objection to the proposal and the proposed protection measures are considered acceptable. As such the proposal is considered to sufficiently protect the existing trees and the proposal complies with the above part of policy DP37 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.

Other Matters

A third party representation letter has been received in respect of this application which objects in part due to impact on birds, the removal of asbestos on the site and details of maintenance works. Whilst these comments are noted, no evidence of birds at the site has been provided and they would be protected by separate legislation that the applicant would need to comply with. Works relating to asbestos are also controlled by separate legislation that the applicant would need to comply with. It is not considered necessary for the applicant to provide ongoing maintenance details as part of this application. Southern Water have also suggested a condition to secure measures to protect public sewers. Whilst this is noted these details can be secured through building regulations and as such a condition at this stage is not considered necessary.

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 considered to address the character and scale of the existing and surrounding buildings and appearance of the area, and it would not cause significant harm to the amenities of neighbouring properties. It would also not have any adverse impact on the landscape quality of the High Weald AONB, it would suitably protect existing trees and the resulting parking arrangement would be acceptable. The application is also exempt from the requirement to provide biodiversity net gain. Therefore, the proposal complies with policies DP16, DP21, DP26 and DP37 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, policies ASW14 and ASW21 of the Ashurst Wood Neighbourhood Plan, principles DG49, DG50, DG51 and DG52 of the MSDC Design Guide SPD, the High Weald AONB Management Plan 2024-2029 and with the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Hamish Evans