



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 September 2025 by N Manley BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

Decision by S Edwards BA MATCP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17th November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/D3830/D/25/3366373

29 High Street, Lindfield, West Sussex RH16 2HJ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs J. Murphy against the decision of Mid Sussex District Council.
 - The application Ref is DM/24/3046.
 - The development proposed is described as the “Demolition of existing single storey rear/ side extension and construction of rear single storey extension. Increased cill of window at first floor to rear elevation. Reconstruction of chimney to match existing. Increase in basement footprint and associated internal and external alterations, largely as approved under DM/24/0265, with first floor infill extension and external landscaping works.”
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for the demolition of existing single storey rear/ side extension and construction of rear single storey extension. Increased cill of window at first floor to rear elevation. Reconstruction of chimney to match existing. Increase in basement footprint and associated internal and external alterations, largely as approved under DM/24/0265, with first floor infill extension and external landscaping works at 29 High Street, Lindfield, West Sussex RH16 2HJ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref DM/24/3046, and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: PJC.1384.001 Rev: A; PL101; PL110 and PL111.
 - 3) No external materials shall be used other than those specified on the approved plans and application form.
 - 4) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the Arboricultural Impact Assessment prepared by Broad Oak Tree Consultants Limited, Reference J65.81, dated 18.07.2024.
 - 5) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the flood mitigation measures and building material mitigations outlined within the accompanying Flood Risk Assessment prepared by CGS Civils, Reference: C3275, dated 16.07.2024.
 - 6) Any historic or archaeological features not previously identified which are revealed when carrying out the development hereby permitted shall be retained in-situ and reported to the local planning authority in writing within 2 working days of their being revealed. Works shall be immediately halted in the area/part

of the building affected until provision has been made for the retention and/or recording in accordance with details that shall first have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Work shall continue in accordance with the approved details of retention and/or recording.

- 7) The proposed replacement chimney shall be constructed fully within 6 months of the existing chimney's demolition and shall be retained thereafter.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary Matter

3. The appeal site is situated within the Lindfield Conservation Area (LCA). I shall therefore have special regard to section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the host property and the LCA.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The LCA is defined in part by the historic core of the village, where traditional features such as the church, village pond, and Lindfield Common serve as focal points of community identity and heritage. Together with the rich collection of historic buildings of varying age and architectural styles and mature trees notably lining the High Street, these elements contribute to the special interest of the LCA as a pleasant, characterful English village.
6. 29 High Street (no 29) forms part of a pair of late Victorian semi-detached properties believed to date from around 1900. Like other properties, they occupy a prominent position to the west of the pond and are set back behind generous front gardens. As a pair, they share a number of symmetrical features, including canted bays with sash windows, front entrances set under a bracketed cornice and prominent chimney stacks. At the rear, the properties have adjoining additions which create a broadly identifiable 'T' shaped footprint. By reason of their architectural detailing, particularly their front elevation, and siting in attractive views within the LCA, the pair of semi-detached properties contributes positively to the significance of this designated heritage asset.
7. The proposed two-storey rear extension would partially mask the existing T-shaped element of the semi-detached dwellings. However, the proposed depth and ridge height of the new element would be shorter and lower respectively than those of the original building, ensuring the development would remain subordinate to the host dwelling and allowing the original built form to remain legible. In addition, the proposed gabled design of the new element would reflect the existing gable feature of the shared central rear projection between no 29 and its adjoining neighbour.
8. From the rear of no 29 I observed a range of building forms and extensions to neighbouring dwellings, some of which obscure the original rear elevations and

forms of those properties, with one particularly noticeable nearby two-storey extension to the south protruding deeply into its rear garden. The neighbouring property to the north has also been subject to a large single-storey rear extension which visually encompasses much of its rear elevation. These alterations and extensions simply reflect the varied pattern of development and architectural styles within the LCA. In this context, the proposal would sit comfortably within this established pattern of rear extensions and alterations and no harm would be caused to the special interest of the LCA.

9. Furthermore, the rear positioning of the proposed extension limits its prominence in views from key public vantage points. While the Council raised concerns about views from Denmans Lane, my site visit confirmed that these views are taken across a foreground dominated by a public car park, a tall private garage and the functional rear area of the Co-Op supermarket, which is used for servicing and refuse storage. In my opinion, this visually cluttered backdrop does not reflect the special interest of the LCA and visually competes with the rear of no 29, making its original T-shaped form difficult to discern. Given this context, I conclude that the proposal would not appear unduly prominent in views from Denmans Lane.
10. The single-storey rear extension and landscaping scheme have previously been granted planning permission (Local Planning Authority Reference: DM/24/0265), though the appeal proposal includes minor alterations, including the addition of a window and a small section of wall using bricks rather than timber cladding. I confirm that these elements, including the minor changes proposed as part of the current scheme, would preserve the character and appearance of the LCA.
11. Given the above, I therefore conclude that the proposed development, having regard to its overall scale, design and form, would not cause harm to the host property and the special interest of the LCA as a whole, the character and appearance of which, it follows, would be preserved. I therefore find no conflict with Policies DP26 and DP35 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2013 (adopted 2018), the Mid Sussex Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document SPD (adopted 2020), the Lindfield and Lindfield Rural Neighbourhood Plan 2014 – 2031 (adopted 2016) or chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).
12. Among other things, these policies require that development reflects the distinctive character of towns and villages; be designed to respond to the area's special characteristics, including scale and appearance; take proper account of the impact on the character and appearance of the area; seek to retain features important to that character and to respect the character of the existing building; be sympathetic to local character and history; and preserve, or where appropriate enhance the character and appearance of the area.

Other Matters

13. I have had regard to all representations made. Concerns have been raised regarding discrepancies in relation to the boundary between no 29 and its adjoined neighbour, 27 High Street. However, ownership issues are a private matter between the relevant parties, and therefore fall outside the scope of this planning appeal.

Conditions

14. I have considered the conditions suggested by the Council, making minor amendments where necessary, to ensure compliance with the tests set out within the Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance. In addition to the standard time limit, I shall add a condition specifying the relevant drawings which the development must accord with, in the interests of certainty and to provide clarity. Conditions regarding materials and compliance with the provisions of the Arboricultural Impact Assessment are considered necessary in order to preserve the character and appearance of the LCA. I shall also impose a condition requiring the replacement chimney to be constructed within six months of the demolition of the existing chimney. This will maintain the symmetry of the semi-detached pair and preserve the contribution of no 29 to the character and appearance of the LCA.
15. As the appeal site lies within Flood Zone 1, it is also necessary to require that the development follows the flood mitigation measures set out in the submitted Flood Risk Assessment. Furthermore, given the site's location within a West Sussex County Council Archaeological Notification Area, a condition is required to ensure works are halted and the Council notified in the event of any unexpected archaeological finds.

Conclusion and Recommendation

16. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be allowed.

N Manley

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

17. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's recommendation and on that basis the appeal is allowed.

S Edwards

INSPECTOR