



Development Management
Horsham District Council
Albery House
Springfield Road
Horsham
West Sussex
RH12 2GB

Date 18/02/2026
Your ref PP-14716848
Our ref A57/256287

Dear Sir/Madam

**Temporary change of use of Hotel to provide a HMO for Nursing Home staff.
Wimblehurst Hotel, Wimblehurst Road, Horsham.**

Please find enclosed a full planning application for the temporary change of use of the existing Hotel (Class C1) to a 14 Bedroom HMO (sui generis) at the above site.

The proposal would not require any changes to the external appearance of the building or external works to facilitate the proposed change of use. The application relates solely to the change of use aspect of the unit and the required internal works to enable the building to be used as a 14 bedroom HMO.

Site and surroundings

The application site is located on the southern side of Wimblehurst Road and comprises of a large, detached, 2-storey Edwardian property. The surrounding area is predominantly made up of similar large detached Edwardian properties which have generally been converted into other uses such as nursing homes, hotels and B&B accommodation.

The site is located within the defined built-up area of Horsham and within the Horsham (Richmond Road) Conservation Area.

Background and planning history

The existing hotel use declined post covid and has now ceased. The applicant has recently purchased the property and owns both this site and the neighbouring care home of Ashtonleigh.

Griffin House 135 High Street Crawley West Sussex RH10 1DQ DX DX 57102 Crawley
Main line 01293 605000 Direct line 01293 605160 Fax 01293 605080 Email Peter.Rainier@dmhstallard.com

Offices in London, Gatwick, Guildford, Brighton and Horsham. Website www.dmhstallard.com

DMH Stallard LLP is a limited liability partnership registered in England (registered number OC338287). Its registered office is Griffin House, 135 High Street, Crawley, West Sussex, RH10 1DQ and it is authorised and regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority. The term partner is used to refer to a member of DMH Stallard LLP. A list of members may be inspected at the registered office. The firm is part of Law Europe and is represented around the world through its international network.



The applicant proposes to make improvements and an extension in order to create a larger care home across both sites. However, in the interim, the applicant would like to utilise Wimblehurst Hotel as a HMO to be occupied solely by staff of the Ashtonleigh Care Home and other Care Homes operated by the applicant under the Ashtonleigh Care Group.

It is important to note that the proposed use as a HMO would only be for a temporary period until the proposed extensions and alterations to create the larger care home across both sites has been submitted and approved. With this in mind the proposal for the Change of Use of the building will be for a temporary use of 18 months.

Relevant Planning Policy

Local Planning Policy

Policies 2 and 3 of the Horsham District Planning Framework state that the district has a distinctive settlement pattern, which the framework seeks to retain and enhance. Development within the built-up area boundaries is accepted in principle, and that appropriate development, including infilling, within the built-up areas will be prioritised.

Policy HB1 of the Horsham Blueprint Business Neighbourhood Plan states that development in the Neighbourhood Area shall be focussed within the built-up area boundary.

The site is located within the built-up area of Horsham. Horsham is defined as a settlement with a large range of employment services and facilities and leisure opportunities, including those providing a district function. There are strong social networks with good rail and bus accessibility and meets the majority of its own needs and many of the nearby smaller settlements.

Given the location of the site within the built-up area boundary of Horsham, the principle of development is considered to be acceptable, subject to all other detailed material planning considerations

Policy 32: The Quality of New Development and Policy 33: Development Principles both seek to promote development which is of high quality and design and is sympathetic to the distinctiveness of the locality. Policy 33 also requires developments to consider the scale, massing and orientation between buildings, respecting the amenities and sensitivities of neighbouring properties.

Policy 32 of the HDPF states that permission will be granted for development that does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of the occupiers/users of nearby properties and land.

Policy 34: Cultural and Heritage Assets states that development should preserve and/or enhance the special character and distinctiveness of the Conservation Area.

Policy 40 states that transport access and ease of movement is a key factor in the performance of the local economy. The need for sustainable transport and safe access is vital to improve development across the district.

Policy 41 of the HDPF states that development that adequate parking facilities must be provided within the developments to meet the needs of the anticipated users.

Appraisal of proposal against planning policy

Principle of proposal

As set out above, the unit is located within the built-up-area of Horsham. Horsham is defined as a settlement with a large range of employment services and facilities and leisure opportunities, including those providing a district function. There are strong social networks with good rail and bus accessibility and meets the majority of its own needs and many of the nearby smaller settlements.

Given the location of the site within the built-up area boundary of Horsham, the principle of development should be considered acceptable in principle under Policies 2 & 3 of the HDPF, subject to all other detailed material planning considerations.

Character and appearance

There are no external changes proposed through the application, with the existing elevation details to remain the same. As such, the proposal is thought to preserve the existing character of the Conservation Area and is not considered to have any impact on the existing street scene. The proposed change of use is therefore considered to be in accordance with the requirements of Policy 34 of the HDPF.

Residential amenity

The site is generally surrounded by a mix of residential properties and other similar uses, such as the Ashtonleigh Care Home to the west and the Ashton Grange Care Home to the south. In terms of neighbouring amenity, it is considered that the temporary use of the site as a HMO would comprise a similar day to day use comparable to the existing residential use, and the previous use as a Hotel. The use will ostensibly remain within a residential use, which is similar to the existing use and the previous use as a Hotel, thus

it is considered that neighbouring amenity will not be adversely impacted by way of disturbances beyond that expected for residential/hotel uses.

Access, parking and traffic movements

The site is located in a highly sustainable area with good access to public transport, including Horsham train station and local bus routes. There are 9 parking spaces to be provided on site and this is considered to be adequate given the site's location in the built-up-area and proximity to other modes of transport.

It should also be noted that the occupants of the HMO will be restricted to the staff of the Care Home next door, or of other Care Homes in the applicants Care Home Group. With that in mind, the occupants of the HMO are unlikely to have their own vehicle and are likely to walk to work given the very short distances involved. Any vehicular comings and goings of the site will be limited as staff will likely travel to and from the other Care Homes in the area in a minibus or public transport. There is a bus stop outside of the site which provides regular services to Horsham and other locations in the District and beyond.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policies 40 & 41 of the HDPF, which promotes sustainable transport and safe access, and requires that sufficient parking be provided for developments.

BNG

The proposal is considered to be exempt from the requirements to achieve a minimum 10% BNG as the development qualifies as 'de minimus' under Regulation 4 of the Biodiversity Net Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024.

CIL

The Council's CIL charging schedule was adopted in April 2017. The Council's CIL charging schedule and the relevant page of the Council's website advises that applications which propose residential development are CIL liable, and that 'residential development' in this case is classed as dwelling houses (C3), retirement homes falling within C3, houses in multiple occupation (C4), and purpose-built student accommodation (C2), but excludes all other forms of institution in C2.

Proposals which fall outside of the 'residential development' uses which are defined above are subject to a 'Standard Charge' which is currently set at £0/m² for 2026.

The application proposes a HMO to be occupied by more than 6 people and it is therefore considered to be a 'sui generis' use class, and based on the information

contained in the Councils CIL Charging Schedule it is not considered that the development will be CIL liable.

Conclusion

Overall, it is considered that the proposed temporary change of use of the building to a HMO would be appropriate and comply with the relevant planning policies of the HDPF as set out above. Furthermore, it is considered that although temporary, the proposal will maintain the integrity and appearance of the existing building, the streetscene and the character of the Conservation Area, and is not anticipated to have any material impact on the visual amenities of the local area or neighbours or give rise to any other material impacts.

I trust that you have everything you need to validate this application and look forward to hearing from you in due course, however, please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any queries.

Yours sincerely



Peter Rainer
Principal Director of Planning
For and on behalf of DMH Stallard LLP