Horsham District Council

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/25/0363
Pulborough Rugby Football Club, Pulborough Road, Cootham, Pulborough, West Sussex, RH20 4HP

DESCRIPTION:

Variation of Condition 1 of previously approved application DC/22/1585 (Erection of a single storey side extension to the existing clubhouse for additional changing facilities with 10no. rooflights. Erection of a single storey Training Barn facility with 8no. rooflights. Installation of 4no. luminaires to the existing floodlight columns to provide lighting for Training pitch located North-West of the site.) To change siting of approved side extension.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/22/1585	Erection of a single storey side extension to the existing clubhouse for additional changing facilities with 10no. rooflights. Erection of a single storey Training Barn facility with 8no. rooflights. Installation of 4no. luminaires to the existing floodlight columns to provide lighting for Training pitch located North-West of the site.	Application Permitted on 30.04.2024
DC/18/1781	Installation of 6no. 12m high floodlighting columns fitted with 12no. luminaires.	Application Permitted on 01.03.2019

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The application relates to an existing single storey building used in connection with Pulborough Rugby Club, sited to the east of the A283. The building is composed of a timber clad frame atop a brick plinth, hosting a shallow metal sheet pitched roof. The wider site comprises three rugby pitches to the north and a parking area to the south. The surrounding area is rural in character, composed predominantly of sporadic residential development and agricultural uses.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

Planning permission was granted under DC/22/1585 for erection of a single-storey extension to the existing clubhouse, in addition to the erection of a detached training barn and replacement floodlighting.

This planning application seeks permission to change the siting of the previously approved side extension to move the extension 2 metres further forward (north) for the reason of to avoid a high voltage electric cable supplying the nearby substation. The amended extension in this application will remain with exactly the same footprint but moved forward (north).

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):
Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development

Policy 2 - Strategic Policy: Strategic Development
Policy 3 - Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy
Policy 11 - Tourism and Cultural Facilities
Policy 24 - Strategic Policy: Environmental Protection
Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Policy 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection
Policy 27 - Settlement Coalescence
Policy 28 - Replacement Dwellings and House Extensions in the Countryside
Policy 29 - Equestrian Development
Policy 30 - Protected Landscapes
Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles
Policy 34 - Cultural and Heritage Assets
Policy 35 - Strategic Policy: Climate Change
Policy 36 - Strategic Policy: Appropriate Energy Use
Policy 37 - Sustainable Construction
Policy 38 - Strategic Policy: Flooding
Policy 39 - Strategic Policy: Infrastructure Provision
Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport
Policy 41 - Parking
Policy 42 - Strategic Policy: Inclusive Communities
Policy 43 - Community Facilities, Leisure and Recreation

Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19):
Strategic Policy 1: Sustainable Development
Strategic Policy 2: Development Hierarchy
Strategic Policy 3: Settlement Expansion
Strategic Policy 4: Horsham Town
Strategic Policy 6: Climate Change
Strategic Policy 7: Appropriate Energy Use
Strategic Policy 8: Sustainable Design and Construction
Strategic Policy 9: Water Neutrality
Strategic Policy 10: Flooding
Strategic Policy 11: Environmental Protection
Strategic Policy 12: Air Quality
Strategic Policy 13: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Strategic Policy 14: Countryside Protection
Strategic Policy 15: Settlement Coalescence
Strategic Policy 16: protected Landscapes
Strategic Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 18: Local Green Space
Strategic Policy 19: Development Quality
Strategic Policy 20: Development Principles
Policy 21: Heritage Assets and Managing Change within the Historic Environment
Strategic Policy 27: Inclusive Communities, Health and Wellbeing
Policy 28: Community Facilities, Leisure and Recreation
Strategic Policy 29: New Employment
Strategic Policy 30: Enhancing Existing Employment
Policy 31: Rural Economic Development
Policy 32: Conversion of Agricultural and Rural Buildings to Commercial, Community and Residential Uses
Policy 33: Equestrian Development
Strategic Policy 34: Tourism Facilities and Visitor Accommodation

Supplementary Planning Guidance:
Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing SPD (2017)
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule (2017)

Storrington Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan:
Policy 6 Development in Storrington Village Centre
Policy 14 Design

Planning Advice Notes:
Facilitating Appropriate Development
Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

REPRESENTATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS RESPONSES

Where consultation responses have been summarised, it should be noted that Officers have had consideration of the full comments received, which are available to view on the public file at www.horsham.gov.uk

Consultations:

Natural England: Standing Advice:-

It cannot be concluded that existing abstraction within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone is not having an adverse effect on the integrity of the Arun Valley SAC/SPA/Ramsar sites. Developments within Sussex North must therefore must not add to this impact and one way of achieving this is to demonstrate water neutrality. The definition of water neutrality is the use of water in the supply area before the development is the same or lower after the development is in place.

To achieve this Natural England is working in partnership with all the relevant authorities to secure water neutrality collectively through a water neutrality strategy. Whilst the strategy is evolving, Natural England advises that decisions on planning applications should await its completion. However, if there are applications which a planning authority deems critical to proceed in the absence of the strategy, then Natural England advises that any application needs to demonstrate water neutrality.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS:

Ecology: No ecological objection, subject to Natural England's comments on the conclusion of the bat AA

Natural England: No Comment

South Downs National Park: No Comment

Representations:

None received

Parish Comments:

None received

Member Comments:

None received

HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY:

The application has been considered having regard to Article 1 of the First Protocol of the Human Rights Act 1998, which sets out a person's rights to the peaceful enjoyment of property and Article 8 of the same Act, which sets out their rights in respect to private and family life and for the home. Officers consider that the proposal would not be contrary to the provisions of the above Articles.

The application has also been considered in accordance with Horsham District Council's public sector equality duty, which seeks to prevent unlawful discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between people in a diverse community, in accordance with Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. In this case, the proposal is not anticipated to have any potential impact from an equality perspective.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development:

The site is located outside of the built-up area and is therefore considered to be within a countryside location. Therefore, the Council's countryside protection policy applies. Policy 26 of the HDPF states that outside built-up area boundaries, the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside will be protected against inappropriate development. Any proposal must be essential to its countryside location, and in addition meet one of the following criteria: support the needs of agriculture or forestry; enable the extraction of minerals of the disposal of waste; provide for quiet informal recreational use; or enable the sustainable development of rural areas. In addition, proposals must be of a scale appropriate to its countryside character and location. Development will be considered acceptable where it does not lead, either individually or cumulatively, to a significant increase in the overall level of activity in the countryside, and protects, and/or conserves, and/or enhances, the key features and characteristics of the landscape character area in which it is located.

Policy 42 (Inclusive Communities) supports positive measures which help create a socially inclusive and adaptable environment for a range of occupiers and users to meet their long-term needs will be encouraged and supported.

The site relates to an existing rugby club, which has been in place since at least 2005 following the approval of DC/04/2668. Policy 43(1) (Community Facilities, Leisure and Recreation) states that the provision of new or improved community facilities or services will be supported, particularly where they meet the identified needs of local communities as indicated in the current Sport, Open Space and Recreation Study and other relevant studies, or contribute to the provision of Green Infrastructure.

The principle of development was established by the previous application under reference DC/22/1585. The proposal would reflect the size, footprint, and purpose of that previously approved, albeit in a slightly different siting. The development is therefore considered acceptable, subject to all other material considerations.

Design and Appearance:

Policy 32 of the HDPF states that good design is a key element in sustainable development, and seeks to ensure that development promotes a high standard of urban design, architecture and landscape. Policy 33 of the HDPF states that development proposals should make efficient use of land, integrate effectively with the character of the surrounding area, use high quality and appropriate materials, retain landscaping where feasible (and mitigate loss if necessary) and ensure no conflict with the character of the surrounding town or landscape.

The proposed amendment to the extension to the clubhouse would maintain existing proportions of the building, extending some 7.8 metres from the eastern side elevation and repositioned 2 metres to the north. The clubhouse is sited relatively centrally within the site, away from any neighbouring boundaries, and sits relatively isolated within the site. The RFC benefits from a generous curtilage, extending to the north accommodating three pitches, and to the south with car parking. The site neighbours adjacent fields, with sporadic residential development interspersed. The site's curtilage and the clubhouse's setting within it can accommodate the amendment. As the extension would maintain existing proportions of the clubhouse, and that materials are proposed to match, Officers are satisfied that the proposal is suitably designed within this context.

The visual difference is not considered to detract from the overall quality of the development. As such, no objections are raised to this regard. With the above in mind, the proposal is considered to accord with Policies 32 and 33 of the HDPF with regards to its design, scale and appearance.

Amenity Impacts:

Policy 33(2) of the HDPF states that development should be designed to avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of occupiers/users of nearby property and land, whilst having regard to the sensitivities of surrounding development.

The site is located at some distance from existing nearby residential properties. The closest of which is sited to the north-west (40 Bog Common) set some 318m from the proposal site. Properties to the south on Chalk Farm are set some 380m from the site. Given the distance of the site in relation to the neighbours, the proposed amended extension would not harm neighbouring amenity by way overlooking, overshadowing, or overbearing. It is noted that the pitches are located closer to the northern neighbours than the clubhouse itself. As above, the proposal would not result in an adverse increase in activity levels over and above the existing arrangement, thus the site's use would not be intensified. As such, no objections are raised on these grounds.

Highways Impacts:

Policy 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework 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 Horsham District Planning Framework states that development that involved the loss of existing parking spaces will only be allowed if suitable alternative provision has been secured elsewhere. Adequate parking facilities must be provided within the developments to meet the needs of the anticipated users.

No changes are proposed to the existing parking arrangements and no anticipation of additional vehicular movements to and from the site. Therefore, the Council does not consider that this proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Therefore, there are no transport grounds to resist this proposal.

Ecology:

The site is located within the Bat Sustenance Zone, and lies approximately 8.2km from The Mens and Ebernoe Common Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) for which one of the qualifying features is Barbastelle bats. The site lies within the 12km Wider Conservation Area for the SACs (Sussex Bat Special Area of Conservation Planning and Landscape Scale Enhancement Protocol and therefore may be within the range of foraging areas required by the bats. As there are trees on site that may be impacted by the development, the Council must assess the ecological impacts that may arise from the proposal.

The applicant has previously provided in relation to DC/22/1585 a Preliminary Roost Assessment & Bat Scoping Survey which concluded that no evidence of roosting bats was found in the clubhouse during the emergence and return to roost surveys and none of the trees on site have potential roost features. Therefore, no further surveys are required. Given the site's location to the Mens SAC, Barbastelle bats may use this habitat- the submitted survey recommended that a Wildlife Friendly Lighting Strategy is implemented for this application (Preliminary Roost Assessment & Bat Scoping Survey (Drummond Ecology, August 2023) to avoid impacts from light disturbance. The Council's Ecological consultant has no ecological objection, subject to Natural England's comments on the conclusion of the bat AA. Natural England's re-consultation response raised no objection.

With the above in mind, the proposed development would not result in adverse ecological harm, in accordance with Policy 31 of the HDPF.

Water Neutrality:

The application site falls within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone as defined by Natural England which draws its water supply from groundwater abstraction at Hardham. Natural England has issued a Position Statement for applications within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone which states that it cannot be concluded with the required degree of certainty that new development in this zone would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites.

Natural England advises that plans and projects affecting sites where an existing adverse effect is known will be required to demonstrate, with sufficient certainty, that they will not contribute further to an existing adverse effect. The received advice note advises that the matter of water neutrality should be addressed in assessments to agree and ensure that water use is offset for all new developments within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone.

As above, the proposal would not facilitate an increased use of the site, instead allowing two groups of people to use the same facilities at the same time rather than separately. The barn is not proposed to be fit with any water fixtures and would involve moving training exercises (which are currently undertaken outside on the pitches) into the inside of the building. The overall result of which would not increase water use over and above the existing arrangement. Officers are therefore satisfied that the proposal would be water neutral.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG):

Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) mandates that every development must achieve at least a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG (unless the development qualifies as exempt under the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024) and that every planning permission granted for the development of land in England shall be deemed to have been granted subject to the condition that development must not be begun unless a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority and the planning authority has approved the Plan.

The Biodiversity Gain Plan must show how the development will achieve the required minimum 10% BNG using the statutory biodiversity metric tool, and must demonstrate how the habitats will be managed and maintained for 30 years, starting from the date the development is completed. Off-site gains and significant on-site enhancements will be secured over this period by way of a Legal Agreement.

The Applicant has demonstrated that the development is exempt from the requirement to achieve a minimum 10% BNG by reason of:

- The original planning permission to which this section 73 planning application relates was made or granted before 12th February 2024 (in respect of major development), or before 2nd April 2024 (in respect of non-major development) under Regulation 3 of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024

Conclusions:

The proposal would relate to an existing sport facility and would not result in a perceived adverse increase in activity over and above the existing arrangement. The amended extension to the existing clubhouse and training barn are considered suitably scaled, designed and sited in context of its setting, and would not result in any harm to neighbouring amenity. In addition, the proposed development would not result in an increase water demand, thus would not result in any increased water abstraction from the Hardham borehole.

Recommendation: Application Permitted

Conditions:

2 **Standard Time Condition**: The development hereby permitted must be commenced by the 30 April 2027.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

3 **Pre-Commencement (Slab Level) Condition**: The 4no. luminaires hereby permitted not be first used until a Biodiversity Enhancement Layout, providing the finalised details and locations of the enhancement measures contained within the Preliminary Roost Assessment & Bat Scoping Survey (Drummond Ecology, August 2023) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to the commencement of the development above slab level. The enhancement measures shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to occupation and all features shall be retained in that manner thereafter.

Reason: To enhance protected and Priority species and allow the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under the s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority Habitats & Species).

4 **Pre-Use Condition**: The 4no. luminaires hereby permitted not be first used until a lighting design scheme for biodiversity shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the first use of any additional external lighting. The scheme shall identify those features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats and that are likely to cause disturbance along important routes used for foraging; and show how and where external lighting will be installed (through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans, Isolux drawings and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent bats using their territory.

All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the scheme, and shall be maintained thereafter in accordance with the scheme. Under no circumstances shall any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority.

Reason: To allow the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 as amended and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species) and Policy 31 of the Horsham Development Framework.

5 **Regulatory Condition**: All mitigation and enhancement measures and/or works shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in the Preliminary Roost Assessment & Bat Scoping Survey (Drummond Ecology, August 2023) as already submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination.

This may include the appointment of an appropriately competent person e.g. an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) to provide on-site ecological expertise during construction. The appointed person shall undertake all activities, and works shall be carried out, in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To conserve and enhance protected and Priority species and allow the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 as amended and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species) and Policy 31 of the Horsham Development Framework.

6 **Regulatory Condition**: The materials and finishes of all new external walls, windows and roofs hereby permitted shall match in type, colour and texture those of the existing building.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

7 **Regulatory Condition**: No externally located plant or equipment shall be installed or operated without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority by way of formal application.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the adjoining neighbouring properties and in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

8 **Regulatory Condition**: The external floodlighting hereby approved shall not be used between the hours of 21:30 and 09:00 daily.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the locality and in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE STATEMENT

Statement pursuant to Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received, in order to be able to, where possible, grant permission.

Plans list for: DC/25/0363
(The approved plans will form Condition 1 on the Decision Notice of all Permitted applications)

Schedule of plans/documents **approved**:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Elevation plan	Proposed Elevations	2024.434.05 REV A	10.03.2025
Block plan	Proposed Block Plan	2024.434.02 REV A	10.03.2025
Floor plan	Proposed Floor Plan	2024.434.06BC REV A	10.03.2025
Location plan	Existing Location Plan	2024.434.01BC	19.05.2025
Supporting Docs	Preliminary Roost Assessment & Bat Scoping Report by Drummond Ecology dated August 2023	PRA/BSS/ PRFC/AUG 2023	29.08.2023
Supporting Docs	Emergence & Return to Roost Survey by Drummond Ecology dated August 2023	PRFC/EMS/RRS/ 2023	29.08.2023
Supporting Docs	100 Lux Match Play + Training Areas by Philips Lighting dated 19.10.2021	NONE	06.10.2022

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Steve Astles Date: 08.07.2025

Authorising Officer sign/initial Tamara Dale Date: 09.07.2025