Horsham District Council

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/25/1207
Outaway, Bonnetts Lane, Ifield, West Sussex, RH11 0NY

DESCRIPTION:

Retention of hardstanding ancillary to airport car parking use.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

RS/1/60	Agricultural building Comment: Bbl (From old Planning History)	Application Permitted on 13.01.1960
RS/22/88	Erection of animal housing units (From old Planning History)	Application Permitted on 08.06.1988
RS/36/59	Erection of garages (From old Planning History)	Application Refused on 09.12.1959
RS/43/60	Continuance of use for repair of vehicles - use of car park with part of bungalow for use as office (From old Planning History)	Application Refused on 11.01.1961
RS/51/86	Extension to bungalow Comment: Appeal allowed 10/06/87 (From old Planning History)	Application Permitted on 10.06.1987
DC/04/2700	Erection of 2 dwellings and access (Outline)	Application Refused on 26.01.2005
DC/13/0397	Use of land adjacent to Outaway, Bonnets Lane for overspill long term off-airport car parking use (Certificate of Lawful Development - Existing)	Application Permitted on 18.12.2013
DC/16/0787	Proposed installation of 55 individually sensor controlled floodlighting columns	Application Permitted on 04.11.2016

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The application site comprises land the rear of Outaway which is a residential bungalow located on the eastern side of Bonnetts Lane within a countryside location. The wider site to the south east has a lawful use for airport parking (DC/13/0397) with no restrictions on operating hours or numbers of vehicles. The site is enclosed by perimeter fencing. The immediate surroundings are characterised by sporadic residential properties made up of large houses in generous plots together with farms and businesses and open fields. Old Bonnetts Cottage is a Grade II Listed Building situated on Bonnets Lane immediately to the west of the site. Gatwick Airport is to the north.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

This application seeks to regularise an area of hardstanding that has been laid to replace grassed areas in an area to the north west of the existing airport parking. The hardstanding is used to assist in the operation of the site to manoeuvre cars from the storage area ready for relocation off site. Post and rail

fence is in place to some boundaries of the new hardstanding. The hardstanding is a hardcore compact type 1 stable hardstanding.

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 4 - Strategic Policy: Settlement Expansion
Policy 7 - Strategic Policy: Economic Growth
Policy 9 - Employment Development
Policy 10 - Rural Economic Development
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 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 40 - Sustainable Transport
Policy 41 - Parking

Rusper Neighbourhood Plan
RUS1: Spatial Plan
RUS3: Design
RUS10: Dark Skies

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

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:

HDC Conservation: Objection

In this case it is important to consider the impact to the setting of the listed building other than visual impact. Mindful that the increased hard standing areas has the potential to result in an increase in vehicle movements, artificial light and background noise due to vehicle movements and alarms. If this is the result, then this will negatively impact the setting of the listed building which contributes to its special

interest as a rural dwelling. The increase in background noise particularly car alarms, artificial light and vehicle movements does not reflect the type of activity that is expected in a rural setting on land previously associated with agricultural use. If confident there has been an increase in activity, background noise and artificial light then consider this to harm the setting of the listed building. This harm should be considered less than substantial and at the lower end of the scale.

WSCC Highways: Comment

This application is for the retention of hardstanding ancillary to airport car parking use. The site is located on Bonnetts Lane, an un-classified road subject to a speed limit of 40mph.

The proposal is for regularisation of land included within a 2013 CLUED application DC/13/0397 to be utilised for overspill airport car parking. The application is supported by a Transport Statement (TS) by GTA Civils which indicates that the land is in use for overspill parking as and when required, and that the use has operated on this site for some time. The TS states that the proposal will not generate any additional movements to or from the site above those approved under DC/13/0397.

The LHA are satisfied that on the basis of this application regularising the existing operations and not generating any additional movements to or from the site, this proposal would not result in any highway safety concerns on the nearby road network.

The LHA 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 (paragraph 116), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS:

Representations:

Two letters of Objection have been received from two addresses, objecting to the application on the following grounds:

- Impact on neighbouring properties
- Change of use out of keeping with area
- Increase in hardstanding – flood risk
- Impact on trees
- Increase in volume of cars using Bonnetts lane
- Noise impact on neighbours
- Change of use from agricultural land

Rusper Parish Council: Objection

Objection is raised on the grounds that the proposal represents inappropriate development in the countryside, with associated concerns about increased vehicle movements leading to additional traffic, noise, and air pollution on rural roads that are unsuitable for such intensification. The scheme would facilitate further off-site car parking linked to Gatwick. In addition, the potential for car alarms sounding at all hours poses a significant risk of disturbance to local residents.

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 application site is located beyond a defined built-up area, therefore constituting a countryside location for the purposes of planning policy in accordance with paragraph 4.7 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) (2015), and where countryside protection policy set-out at HDPF policy 26 applies.

In this context, in accordance with HDPF policy 26, it would be expected that development be essential to this countryside location and not lead to a significant increase in overall activity on an individual or cumulative basis. Essential development under HDPF 26 is considered to involve works supporting the needs of agriculture or forestry, mineral extraction or waste disposal, quiet recreational use of sustainable development of rural areas. One of the criteria of HDPF policy 26 is that suitable proposals must be of a scale appropriate to its countryside character and location, and would be considered acceptable where they do not 'lead, individually or cumulatively, to a significant increase in the overall 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 10 of the HDPF supports development in the countryside that maintains the quality and character of the area and sustains social and economic activity. It states that such development should be appropriate to the location and should contribute to farming enterprises in the district or the wider rural economy and/or promote recreation in, and the enjoyment of, the countryside. Policy 10 is also clear that countryside development must: be contained where possible in suitably located buildings which are appropriate for conversion; or result in substantial environmental improvement and reduce the impact on the countryside.

Policy 41 states that planning permission will not be granted for off-airport parking facilities related to Gatwick Airport unless a need can be demonstrated and all realistic alternatives have been examined.

This application seeks to provide additional turning and manoeuvring space to assist in the running of the lawful airport parking to the south east. Prior to the laying of the additional hardstanding at the site, it appears to have been mostly grassed paddocks with access roads to the rear parking and residential unit between them. The application does not increase the number of airport parking spaces which remains at 980. The use of the wider site has already been established and this minor extension for operational purposes needs to be considered with regard to this. It is considered that due to the minor nature of the additional hardstanding and no increase in parking provision, that on balance the principle of development is considered acceptable.

Design and Appearance / Character Impact:

Policy 25 (The Natural Environment and Landscape Character) of the HDPF states that proposals will be required to protect, conserve, and enhance the landscape character, taking into account areas identified as being of landscape importance, the individual settlement characteristics, and maintains settlement separation

Policy 33 of the HDPF promotes development that is of a high-quality design, which is sympathetic to the character and distinctiveness of the site and surroundings, contributing to a sense of place through appropriate scale, massing, and appearance, respecting the amenities and sensitivities of neighbouring properties.

The retrospective proposal does result in a more urbanised setting than was previously present at this end of the site, and there is no doubt that there has been a negative impact on the character of the site in its countryside context. However, the site itself is situated as such that there are no views into the site

from PRoWs or Highways and the only real receptor would be Outaways itself. No boundary vegetation would be visibly lost and whilst some internal vegetation may have been impacted by the laying of the hardstanding, this does not afford any protection in planning terms. The small increase in hardstanding at the site is considered to have a minor impact on the overall impact of the site in landscape terms especially in its context adjacent to the large car park and therefore the increase in hardstanding is not considered to be a reason for refusal in this case.

Heritage Impact:

Policy 34 of the HDPF states that development should reinforce the special character of the District's historic environment through appropriate siting, scale, form and design, and should make a positive contribution to the character and distinctiveness of the area; ensuring that development in Conservation Areas is consistent with the special character of those areas.

Old Bonnetts Cottage is a Grade II Listed Building situated on Bonnets Lane immediately to the west of the site. This is separated from the site by a tall conifer hedge within the site ownership. The Conservation Officer has raised concerns in relation to the impact of the proposal on the setting of this building. However, this is mostly on the basis of an increase in vehicle movements and artificial light that may result from the increase in hardstanding. In this case, it is not considered that the hardstanding has resulted in an increase in activity, background noise or artificial light, as the hardstanding is not to accommodate additional parking, but to help with the operation of the parking on the wider site. No lighting is proposed and a condition restricting any additional lighting is recommended. A site visit (13.11.25) has confirmed that the Listed Building cannot be seen form the site due to the tall boundary hedge/trees and that there are no lights or cars parked in the new hardstanding area.

The Conservation Officer has determined that this harm should be considered less than substantial and at the lower end of the scale. In line with NPPF Paragraph 215, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. This is considered in the Conclusion and planning balance section of this report.

Residential Amenity:

Policy 33 of the HDPF provides that development will be required to ensure a design that avoids unacceptable harm to the occupiers/users of nearby property and land.

Objections have been raised on the grounds that the proposal represents inappropriate development in the countryside, with associated concerns about increased vehicle movements leading to additional traffic, noise, and air pollution on rural roads that are unsuitable for such intensification. In addition, the potential for car alarms sounding.

As the proposal is not for an additional number of cars to be parked at the site it is not considered justified to consider that the increase in hardstanding and change of use will result in an unacceptable amenity impact. The agent has agreed that a condition limiting the hardstanding extension to ancillary operational purposes relating to the airport parking rather than the additional parking of cars for airport users would be acceptable. This will help to ensure the site does not unintentionally grow in intensity/ activity of use over and above the permitted space for airport parking. It should be noted that additional parking over and above the current position on site has potential to start to have an unacceptable cumulative impact on neighbour amenity and is unlikely to be acceptable in this countryside location.

It is noted that on the submitted plan there is a 'workshop' identified. This appears to be a former agricultural building that is now being used for storage purposes in connection with the airport parking. It is recommended that this building be restricted by planning condition to a storage use ancillary to the airport parking to the south and no plant or machinery to be operated without prior consent. This would allow full consideration of the amenity impact to neighbours of any other use than storage.

Highways Impacts:

Policy 40 of the HDPF 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 stipulates that development must provide adequate parking and facilities to meet the needs of anticipated users, with consideration given to the needs of cycle parking, motorcycle parking and electric/low emission vehicles. Development which involves the loss of existing parking spaces will only be allowed if suitable alternative provision has been secured elsewhere or the need for development overrides the loss of parking and where necessary measures are in place to mitigate against the impact.

The LHA are satisfied that on the basis of this application regularising the existing operations and not generating any additional movements to or from the site, this proposal would not result in any highway safety concerns on the nearby road network.

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.

There is no clear or compelling evidence to suggest the nature and scale of the proposed development would result in a more intensive use of the site necessitating an increased consumption of water that would result in a significant impact on the Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. The grant of planning permission would not therefore adversely affect the integrity of these sites or otherwise conflict with policy 31 of the HDPF, NPPF paragraph 193 and the Council's obligations under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

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 application is retrospective made under Section 73(A) of the Town and Country Planning Act.

Conclusions and Planning Balance:

This application seeks to regularise an area of hardstanding that has been laid to replace grassed areas in an area to the north west of the existing airport parking. The hardstanding is used to assist in the operation of the site to manoeuvre cars from the storage area ready for relocation off site.

The adjacent property at Old Bonnetts Cottage is a Grade II Listed Building immediately to the west of the site. The Council's Conservation Officer has determined that this change of use could result in harm to the Listed Building and considers this harm to be less than substantial and at the lower end of the scale. This harm is mostly due to the potential use of the hardstanding and the potential for vehicle movements, artificial light and background noise. It is considered that the proposal won't actually increase the activity on the site but will allow for better operational running of the site, where no additional lighting or parked cars are proposed (condition recommended to restrict this).

In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement is required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset (NPPF para 216). In this case it is considered that the less than substantial harm at the lower end of the scale weighed against the minor economic benefits of improving the operational running of the established business would on balance be acceptable, subject to the conditions recommended
The minor alterations within the site, and the laying of hardstanding have impacted the appearance of the site and not enhanced it, but on balance, when considering the extent of the existing lawful parking on the site, it is not considered to be an impact that would warrant a refusal. A condition in recommended to limit the area to uses ancillary to the airport parking to the south rather than for additional airport parking. A condition is recommended to also limit the use of the storage building on site.

Recommendation: Application Permitted

Conditions:

2 **Regulatory Condition**: Within 3 months of the permission hereby granted, the remediation works as outlined within the Arboricultural Survey by The Mayhew Consultancy Ltd dated July 2025 shall be undertaken. The remedial works shall thereafter be retained as such.

Reason: To ensure the successful and satisfactory protection of important trees, shrubs and hedges on the site in accordance with Policies 30 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

3 **Regulatory Condition:** The hardstanding hereby approved within the red line boundary shall be used for purposes ancillary to the operation of the site, and shall at no time be used for the purpose of overnight airport parking.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of adjacent occupiers in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

4 **Regulatory Condition**: The building labelled 'workshop' on the approved plans shall be used for ancillary storage purposes in association with the operation of the site, and for no other use or purpose whatsoever.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of adjacent occupiers in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

5 **Regulatory Condition:** No external lighting or floodlighting shall be installed other than that shown on the approved plans. All such lighting shall be maintained in accordance with the approved details.

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/25/1207
Schedule of plans/documents **approved**:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Tree plan	Tree Protection Plan	AR/162225	22.07.2025
Location & Block plan	Proposed Location Block Plan	0559-2	22.07.2025
Location & Block plan	Existing Location Block Plan	0559-1	22.07.2025
Supporting Docs	Arboricultural Survey by The Mayhew Consultancy Ltd dated July 2025	AR/162225	22.07.2025

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Kate Turner Date: 13.11.25

Authorising Officer sign/initial Tamara Dale Date: 17.11.25