Horsham District Council

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:
DC/25/1958
Milestone House , 86 Hurst Road, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 2DT

DESCRIPTION:
Removal of Condition 3 of previously approved application DC/24/1266 (Erection of single storey side and rear extensions for proposed veterinary surgery (Use class E(e))) relating to water neutrality.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/23/1117	Change of use from Class E(g)(i) offices to Class E(e) medical or health services and internal alterations (Lawful Development Certificate - Proposed)	Application Permitted on 31.07.2023
DC/22/1819	Change of use from offices (Use Class E) to a Large HMO (Sui Generis), for 9no occupants for a temporary period of 12 months (Retrospective).	Withdrawn Application on 31.05.2023
DC/24/1236	Prior Notification for internal change of use from Class E (g) (i) Offices to C3 2nd floor apartment.	Prior Approval Required and REFUSED on 10.12.2024
DC/24/1266	Erection of single storey side and rear extensions for proposed veterinary surgery (Use class E(e)).	Application Permitted on 07.03.2025
DC/24/1762	Demolition of a small section of existing wall, installation of a brick pier and the creation of staff parking and exit.	Application Permitted on 07.03.2025
DISC/25/0138	Approval of details reserved by condition 3 to approved application DC/24/1266	Withdrawn Application on 11.11.2025

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):
Policy 9 - Employment Development
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 40 - Sustainable Transport
Policy 41 - Parking

Horsham Blueprint Business Neighbourhood Plan (HBBNP) 2019 - 2036:
Policy HB3 - Character of Development
Policy HB4 - Design of Development
AIM2 - Conserving Heritage Assets

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:
None received

Parish Comments:
No objections

Representations:
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

Consent is sought to remove Condition 3 attached to the approved permission DC/24/1266 (Erection of single storey side and rear extensions for proposed veterinary surgery (Use class E(e)). Condition 3 states:

3 ***Pre-Commencement Condition****: No development shall commence until either:*

i) Details have been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority confirming that the necessary credits to achieve water neutrality have been secured via the Sussex North Offsetting Water Scheme; or

ii) A site-specific water neutrality mitigation scheme has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The site-specific water neutrality mitigation scheme shall include full details of the means of any and all onsite and offsite mitigation and any necessary agreements pursuant to S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to deliver and secure the approved mitigation.

The development shall not be first occupied until evidence has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority confirming that the approved site-specific water neutrality mitigation scheme has been fully implemented. The approved mitigation shall thereafter be retained, maintained and operated to the same or better water performance standard.

Reason: To ensure the development is water neutral to avoid an adverse impact on the Arun Valley SACSPA and Ramsar sites in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), Paragraphs 193 and 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), and enable the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species).

Water Neutrality

The application seeks to remove a pre-commencement condition which required the development to be carried out in accordance with SNWCS (previously SNOWS (Sussex North Offsetting Water Scheme) or to submit a site-specific water neutrality mitigation scheme.

A 2021 Position Statement from Natural England identified that it could not be concluded with the required degree of certainty that new development in the Sussex North Water Supply Zone would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites. As a consequence, and to comply with the legal duties set out in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (known as the Habitat Regulations), all new development since has been required to demonstrate water neutrality.

On 31st October 2025 Natural England formally withdrew the 2021 Position Statement, citing a package of measures that they were satisfied would safeguard the Arun Valley sites. Principal amongst these measures is a reduction in the Southern Water abstraction licence 'by March 2026'. However, given the licence change has not yet taken place Horsham District Council, as competent authority under the Habitats Regulations, cannot yet be certain that new development will not result in adverse impacts on the Arun Valley sites.

To ensure development can come forward as water neutral in the meantime, the Council has agreed with Natural England to use the significant water savings made by Southern Water in 2024/25 through their programme of leakage reduction (amongst other measures). This has generated some 3,240,000 litres per day of water savings that can now be attributed to new development without increasing water abstraction in the Arun Valley beyond baseline. These savings were previously to be used to launch the Sussex North Water Certification Scheme (SNWCS), however following the withdrawal statement SNWCS will no longer be launching. Natural England standing advice dated 10 November 2025 raises no objection to using these savings to enable development to come forward. The standing advice clarifies that it functions as Natural England's formal response pursuant to Regulation 63(3) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 to all relevant planning applications which seek to achieve water neutrality using the above Southern Water savings.

Officers have undertaken an Appropriate Assessment which demonstrates that the anticipated increase in mains water consumption from this development, alongside all other development granted since the 31st October 2025, will not exceed 3,240,000 litres per day.

Accordingly, Officers consider that the proposed development will not have an Adverse Effect on the Integrity of the Arun Valley Site, either alone or in combination with other plan and projects, thereby complying with Regulations 63 and 70 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, HDPF Policy 31, and paragraph 193 of the NPPF.

Conclusions:

The application seeks to remove a condition in which the applicant was required to demonstrate water neutrality. Since the related application was considered, the Natural England position statement has been withdrawn and the condition is no longer required. It is appropriate and acceptable in this instance therefore for the condition to be removed.

Conclusion

The proposal is considered to comply with relevant local and national planning policies and is therefore recommended for approval.

Recommendation: Application Permitted

Conditions:

2 **Standard Time Condition**: The development hereby permitted must be commenced by the 07 March 2028.

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

3 **Regulatory Condition**: The materials and finishes of all new external walls, windows and roofs of the development 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).

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/25/1958

Schedule of plans/documents **approved**:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Supporting Statement	Cover letter	NONE	28.11.2025
Supporting Statement	Natural England	NONE	28.11.2025
Details plan	Parapet Details	310	07.11.2024
Location plan	Existing and proposed	001	20.08.2024
Tree plan	Existing	003	20.08.2024
Tree plan	Proposed	005	20.08.2024
Floor plan	Existing basement	101	20.08.2024
Floor plan	Existing	102	20.08.2024
Floor plan	Existing first	103	20.08.2024
Floor plan	Proposed basement	301	20.08.2024
Floor plan	Proposed	302	20.08.2024
Supporting Statement	Planning	NONE	20.08.2024
Floor plan	Proposed first	303	20.08.2024
Elevation plan	Existing and proposed front	305	20.08.2024
Elevation plan	Existing and proposed side	306	20.08.2024
Elevation plan	Existing and proposed rear	307	20.08.2024
Elevation plan	Existing and proposed side	308	20.08.2024

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial	JBurrowes	Date:	07/01/2026
Authorising Officer sign/initial	RHERMITAGE	Date:	23.01.2026