



TO: Planning Committee

BY: Head of Development and Building Control

DATE: 17 June 2025

DEVELOPMENT: Change of Use of an area of Hop Oast Park and Ride to storage for clean waste bins to serve food waste services at the Hop Oast Depot.

SITE: Hop Oast Park and Ride Worthing Road Horsham West Sussex

WARD: Southwater North

APPLICATION: DC/25/0430

APPLICANT: **Name:** Horsham District Council Property and Facilities Department
Address: C/O Agent

REASON FOR INCLUSION ON THE AGENDA: Land owned by Horsham District Council

RECOMMENDATION: To approve planning permission subject to appropriate conditions

1 THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

1.1 To consider the planning application.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

- 1.2** The application seeks full planning permission for the change of use of an area of Hop Oast Park and Ride to storage for clean waste bins to serve food waste services at the Hop Oast Depot.
- 1.3** The purpose of this is to allow for storage required in conjunction with facilitating new commercial and domestic food waste collection services from 2025 and 2026 respectively.
- 1.4** Hop Oast is noted within the included planning statement at being at capacity. Opportunity to expand its function can be achieved onsite via the proposal without the need to extend into the countryside by extending into the existing park and ride facility.
- 1.5** The proposed is designed to accommodate the storage of around 1,000 to 1,600 waste bins of capacities ranging from 140 litres to 1,100 litres. The bins will be collected and distributed via LWB vans within the district. Used bins will not be returned or stored at the proposed storage area.
- 1.6** Refuse vehicles will access the new storage area to pick up and drop off clean bins with routing along central avenues of the existing car park. The planning statement outlines that there will only be one return trip generated.

- 1.7 The site is to be enclosed via 2.4m palisade fencing with accompanying palisade gate on the west elevation.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

- 1.8 The application site comprises a parcel of land within the Hop Oast Park and Ride, which is located to the west of Worthing Road, outside of any defined built-up area boundary. The site is therefore located within a countryside location in policy terms.
- 1.9 The site is located to the north west corner of the Park and Ride facility, and currently comprises a number of parking spaces (≈25). The Hop Oast depot is located south of the proposed site.
- 1.10 The wider site comprises car parking spaces, bus shelters and turning area for buses. Access to the site is provided to the south, with the site bound by a bund and mature vegetation.

2. INTRODUCTION

STATUTORY BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

- 2.2 The following Policies are considered to be relevant to the assessment of this application:

2.3 **National Planning Policy Framework:**

2.4 **Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF 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 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
Policy 42 - Strategic Policy: Inclusive Communities

2.5 **Southwater Neighbourhood Development Plan (SNDP) 2019 - 2031:**

SNP1 – Core Principles
SNP14 – Adequate Supply of Car Parking
SNP16 – Design

- 2.6 **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 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 13: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Strategic Policy 14: Countryside Protection
Strategic Policy 15: Settlement Coalescence
Strategic Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Strategic Policy 19: Development Quality
Strategic Policy 20: Development Principles
Strategic Policy 24: Sustainable Transport
Policy 25: Parking
Strategic Policy 27: Inclusive Communities, Health and Wellbeing
Strategic Policy 30: Enhancing Existing Employment
Policy 31: Rural Economic Development
- 2.7 **Supplementary Planning Guidance:**
Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing SPD (2017)
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule (2017)
- 2.8 **Planning Advice Notes:**
Facilitating Appropriate Development
Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

PLANNING HISTORY AND RELEVANT APPLICATIONS

DC/21/0650 Siting of a container to store hard and soft Application Permitted on 09.07.2021
 furniture

3. OUTCOME OF CONSULTATIONS

- 3.1 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.

INTERNAL CONSULTATIONS

- 3.2 **HDC Environmental Health:** No comment

OUTSIDE AGENCIES

- 3.3 **WSCC Highways:** No Objection

The wider Hop Oast Park and Ride site is served by an existing signalised junction on Worthing Road, and no alterations are proposed to this existing access arrangement. Swept path drawings included within the submitted Transport Statement demonstrate that the largest vehicle anticipated can access and egress the site compound to the satisfaction of the LHA.

In addition, the applicant expects a trip generation of 1-2 movements per day for large vehicles, which is a negligible increase and is anticipated to adversely impact the operation of the local highway network.

The existing car park currently hosts approximately 270 car parking spaces, as outlined in the Transport Statement. The proposals will reduce the available car parking provision by approximately 25, to around 245 car parking spaces.

The Transport Statement includes a parking capacity survey, with surveys taking place on a typical weekday and a match day Saturday. The findings were as follows:

Weekday

- Peak occupation: 142 vehicles
- Average occupation: 77 vehicles

Matchday

- Peak occupation: 274 vehicles
- Average occupation: 80 vehicles

The data therefore shows that the car park has capacity to support a reduction in parking on a typical weekday, but may fill to capacity on a matchday, meaning those ~25 car parking spaces lost would have to park elsewhere or travel to the site via other means. For the means of assessing the potential impact, the site does have good public transport connections from Horsham Town Centre and Southwater, and there are alternative options in place for visitors to access the site without needing to rely on the private car. Such provisions are already existing on high-attendance match days, and the impacts from loss of existing parking are anticipated to be minimal. Therefore, the LHA would not raise any safety concerns to the loss of existing parking.

In summary, 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.

3.4 **WSCC Waste and Minerals:**

Hop Oast HWRS is considered to make a significant contribution to the management and transfer of waste within the county, as identified within the most recent WSCC Annual Monitoring Report (2023 - 2024). Accordingly, the site is safeguarded under Policy W2 of the WSCC Waste Local Plan (2014).

The proposed works would support the continued use and operation of the safeguarded waste infrastructure by way of providing storage space for clean waste bins. Therefore, the MWPA would offer no objection to the proposed development.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

3.5 Representations:

None received

3.6 Parish Comments:

Southwater Parish Council: No Objection

3.7 Member Comments:

None received

4. **HOW THE PROPOSED COURSE OF ACTION WILL PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS**

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 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.

5. HOW THE PROPOSAL WILL HELP TO REDUCE CRIME AND DISORDER

- 5.1 It is not considered that the development would be likely to have any significant impact on crime and disorder.

6 PLANNING ASSESSMENTS

- 6.1 The application seeks full planning permission for Change of Use of an area of Hop Oast Park and Ride to storage for clean waste bins to serve food waste services at the Hop Oast Depot.

Principle of Development

- 6.2 *"Our Waste, Our Resources: A Strategy for England" [2018]* recognised the need to implement food waste collection in order to reduce greenhouse emissions by diverting waste from incineration and landfill. As such, the UK Government imposed from the 31st March 2026, waste collection authorities must now provide weekly food waste collection in order to progress to a more circular economy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions to meet net-zero targets.
- 6.3 The West Sussex County Council Waste Local Plan covers the period to 2031 and sets out the vision and strategic objectives for waste planning in the County. The Waste Local Plan includes a number of Strategic Policies, which enable the vision and strategic objectives to be achieved. This includes safeguarding existing sites, provision of well-located facilities and dealing with waste generated in West Sussex in a sustainable manner.
- 6.4 Policy W2 (Safeguarding Waste Management Sites and Infrastructure) of the Waste Local Plan ensures the existing waste management sites are protected from development which would prevent or prejudice their existing operations.
- 6.5 SNP1 states planning policy and development proposals should individually, cumulatively or in combination with other developments make a positive contribution towards the Core Principles. This includes that all development should take into account existing and proposed facilities, infrastructure and resources to ensure a coordinated approach to future development. Infrastructure must be provided that meets the existing and future needs of the community.
- 6.6 The application seeks permission to change of use of an area of Hop Oast Park and Ride to storage for clean waste bins to serve food waste services at the Hop Oast Depot. The bins are to be stored on existing parcel of land, currently used for park and ride services and to be contained by proposed palisade metal fencing and gate for use by Hop Oast Depot.

- 6.7 The proposal would be to serve the obligation to ensure food waste recycling by 31st March 2026 and provide an area to store clean bins prior to delivery out to the district. The proposal would look to promote continual operation of the existing waste management site, safeguarding the site by ensuring that the existing site can continue to operate unimpeded with bins stored approximate to but not at the site in accordance with Policy 2 of the HDPF.
- 6.8 While the proposal would be located outside of the existing Waste and Recycling Facility, it would be located within the established boundaries of the Hop Oast Park and Ride. This is an established, developed facility, which provides parking and bus services to the town centre. This is considered to abide with Policy 10 of the HDPF. Given the nature and character of the Park and Ride Facility, and the relationship with the adjoining Waste and Recycling Facility, it is not considered that the proposal would result in a significant increase in activity within the countryside location owing to the transport assessment and consultation with the local highways authority in accordance with Policy 25 and 26. It would be considered the proposals close proximity to the existing waste site would mean the proposal would be read in association with the aforementioned and would not represent isolated development with no context.
- 6.9 It is considered that the proposal would abide by the policies listed out above and would ensure the continual operation of Hop Oast depot with bins stored off site in an appropriately industrialised area with limited impact on the surrounding context nor result in a significant increase in activity within the countryside location. The proposal it is therefore considered that the proposal is acceptable in principle, subject to all other material considerations and in accordance with policies above and 2; 10; 25; 26 of the HDPF.

Landscape Character and Visual Amenity

- 6.10 SNP16 advocates for design to be of high quality. Though there is no specific architectural style to Southwater, design should be appropriate and respectful of the neighbouring amenity in terms of privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight.
- 6.11 The application site is located within the established boundary of Hop Oast Park and Ride, which comprises an area of hardsurfacing used for the parking of vehicles. The site is bounded by mature vegetation
- 6.12 The proposed palisade fencing sits at 2.4m in height and is 27.5m x 35.75m (983m²). A gate is positioned on the west elevation
- 6.13 While recognised that the proposed fencing and resultant bins to be stored would be of limited aesthetic and visual quality, the additional build and bins would be read in the context of the wider site which is developed. Given this context, it is not considered that the bins or the proposed fencing would be overtly visible or readily apparent from wider view. It is considered the proposal would run in compliance with Policies 25; 32; 33.
- 6.14 It is recognised that the proposed would result in some visual impact, however given the enclosed nature of the site, which is read in the wider context of the Hop Oast Depot and Park and Ride, it is not considered that the resulting harm would be of such a degree to justify a reason for refusal on visual amenity grounds. It is also recognised that the proposal would continue the function of the existing waste site unimpeded.
- 6.15 On the balance of these considerations, the proposal is considered to be of an acceptable scale and siting, with the benefits arising from the development considered to outweigh the limited harm to the landscape character and visual amenity of the site and surroundings and therefore in accordance with policies above and 2; 25; 32; 33 of the HDPF

Amenity Impacts

- 6.16 Given the nature of the site and surroundings, and the modest scale of the proposal, it is not considered that the proposal would result in harm to the amenities of nearby residential properties or users of land. The proposal is considered to accord with Policies 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

Highways Impacts

- 6.17 SNP14 requires that developments that cause a reduction in parking provision are required to show that alternate parking provision can be sought within the curtilage of the property. Proposals that look to create additional bedrooms should also look to create additional parking spaces within the curtilage of the dwelling to the same level as if it were a new dwelling (as set out above) unless this is not practically possible.
- 6.18 The Park and Ride facility was initially approved under planning reference SQ/63/01 with later revisions approved under reference SQ/128/00. Condition 20 of this approval stated that:
- “The use hereby permitted shall not be carried on until provision for the car parking has been made within the site in accordance with details submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority and such provision shall thereafter be used only for the parking of cars.*
- Reason: To ensure that adequate and satisfactory provision is made for the parking of vehicles clear of adjacent highways.”*
- 6.19 The condition requires that the parking spaces be retained for the parking of vehicles. While this does not preclude development (subject to planning permission being granted) the intention of the condition was to ensure that adequate and satisfactory provision is made for the parking of vehicles. The proposed development would result in the loss of a number of parking spaces on the site, and this is a material consideration of weight in the appraisal of the application.
- 6.20 The loss of parking capacity at the site has previously been considered under planning reference DC/16/1633, where the temporary change of use to allow for the parking or refuse and recycling vehicles was proposed. The Transport Statement submitted at this time outlined that the car park generally operates at around 25% capacity, peaking at 60-70% on busy shopping days (primarily at weekends). This supports the assertion of the Applicant that the existing facility operates below capacity, with the proposal not considered to substantially affect the availability of car parking within the facility.
- 6.21 DC/21/0650 (Siting of a container to store hard and soft furniture) also resulted in a parking loss at the park and ride facility with the report stating that the development “result[s] in a loss of approximately 4no. parking spaces. It is however recognised that the Park and Ride facility does not operate at capacity, with the loss of the small number of parking spaces not considered to detrimentally affect the overall operation of the facility”.
- 6.22 The park and ride facility currently has provision for c. 270 parking spaces. The proposal would reduce capacity by around 25 spaces to 245 spaces.
- 6.23 The LHA considered that “[t]he data [] shows that the car park has capacity to support a reduction in parking on a typical weekday, but may fill to capacity on a matchday, meaning [] ~25 car parking spaces lost would have to park elsewhere or travel to the site via other means. For the means of assessing the potential impact, the site does have good public transport connections from Horsham Town Centre and Southwater, and there are alternative options in place for visitors to access the site without needing to rely on the private car. Such provisions are already existing on high-attendance match days, and the impacts from loss of existing parking are anticipated to be minimal. Therefore, the LHA would not raise any safety concerns to the loss of existing parking”.

- 6.24 It is thought that during the week, the car park can handle the loss of 25 spaces as peak occupation and average occupation is 142 vehicles and 77 vehicles respectively. This still leaves a large buffer of available parking. However, the park and ride is used informally as a spectators car park for Horsham Football Club on matchdays. On matchdays, peak occupation is 274 vehicles, and average occupation is 80 vehicles.
- 6.25 It is considered that the loss of parking would impact the provision of parking at the park and ride primarily on matchdays for Horsham Football Club. However, considering the explicit purpose of the park and ride is to function for reducing car journeys into the town by allowing out of town parking and riding a bus into town, the secondary function as an informal spectator's car park for Horsham Football Club on matchdays would not be given a level of protection to prevent a reduction in this use.
- 6.26 Given the average occupation of the car park on a matchday is 80 vehicles, it is considered that the loss of parking of 25 spaces would be acceptable. Although the car park is occupied to its capacity on matchdays, the car park's primary function is not for use by Horsham Football Club's spectators. In addition, the high occupation rate is limited to roughly 2 and half hours on specific matchdays. Though recognised the car park is used by spectators, it is thought that the club remains accessible via the buses stopping at the existing park and ride bus stop and therefore accessible via public transport.
- 6.27 Though the proposal does result in the loss of 25 spaces, it is considered that the need outweighs the negative impact on parking provision. It is not considered that the proposal would result in detrimental impact to the existing facility. WSCC Highways have raised no objection to the proposal, and it is not considered that the proposal would have a detrimental impact on the safety or function of the highway network.
- 6.28 The proposal is therefore considered to accord the policies above and with Policies 40 and 41 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

Water Neutrality:

- 6.29 Horsham District is situated in an area of serious water stress, as identified by the Environment Agency. In September 2021, Natural England released a Position Statement which advised all local authorities within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone that it cannot be concluded that existing water 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 near Pulborough. The Position Statement advises the affected local authorities that developments within the Sussex North Supply Zone must not therefore add to this impact, and to achieve this, all proposals must 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.
- 6.30 In assessing the impact of development on protected habitat sites such as those in the Arun Valley, decision makers must, as the competent authority for determining impact on such sites, ensure full compliance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (known as the Habitat Regulations). The Regulations require that a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) be carried out to determine if a plan or project may affect the protected features of a habitats site, before the grant of any planning permission. Section 70(3) of the Regulations requires that planning permission must not be granted unless the competent authority (Horsham District Council) is satisfied that the proposed development will not adversely affect the integrity of the affected habitats site. Section 63 of the Regulations sets out the process by which an HRA must take place.
- 6.31 The requirements of Section 70(3) are reflected in paragraph 186 of the NPPF, which states that 'if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or,

as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused'. The application site falls within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone which draws its water supply from groundwater abstraction at Hardham (near Pulborough), adjacent to the Arun Valley sites. The water abstraction issues raised by the Natural England Position Statement are therefore material planning considerations relevant to the proposal. Given the requirements of the Habitat Regulations and paragraph 186 of the NPPF, adverse impact on the integrity of the Arun Valley sites must be given great weight in decision making. In order to demonstrate that no adverse impact will occur at the Arun Valley sites, all new development within the supply zone must demonstrate water neutrality, i.e., that water consumption from the site when occupied will not increase water abstraction in the Arun Valley.

- 6.32 Given the applications nature, it is not considered the proposal will have an intrinsic water usage and therefore no water neutrality position is required.

Other Matters:

Climate Change

- 6.33 Policies 35, 36 and 37 require that development mitigates to the impacts of climate change through measures including improved energy efficiency, reducing flood risk, reducing water consumption, improving biodiversity and promoting sustainable transport modes. These policies reflect the requirements of Chapter 14 of the NPPF that local plans and decisions seek to reduce the impact of development on climate change. The proposed development includes the following measures to build resilience to climate change and reduce carbon emissions:

- Dedicated refuse and recycling storage capacity
- Food waste removed from household waste stream.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG):

- 6.34 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 may not be begun unless a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority and the planning authority has approved the Plan.
- 6.35 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.
- 6.36 The development qualifies as 'de minimis' under Regulation 4 of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024

7 Conclusions and Planning Balance:

- 7.1 The development would support the strategic objectives for waste reduction in the county and would facilitate the introduction of food waste disposal as outlined to be implemented by Spring 2026. The facility would provide. While located outside of the built-up area boundary, the proposal would be within the boundaries of an established developed site, and would be of a scale and nature that would not result in a significant increase in activity within the countryside location. The proposal would result in related environmental benefit that would

outweigh the limited harm arising from the loss of parking spaces, and it is therefore considered that the proposal is acceptable in principle, subject to all other material considerations.

- 7.2 It is recognised that the proposed fencing would result in some visual impact, however given the enclosed nature of the site, which is read in the wider context of the Hop Oast Depot and Waste and Recycling facility it is considered that the harm would be limited. The proposal is considered to be of an acceptable scale and siting with it considered to be of limited harm to the landscape character and visual amenity of the site and surroundings.
- 7.3 Given the nature of the site and surroundings, and the modest scale of the proposal, it is not considered that the proposal would result in harm to the amenities of nearby residential properties or users of land or the safety and function of the public highway.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 To approve the application, subject to the following conditions:

Conditions:

1 **Approved Plans**

- 2 **Standard Time Condition:** The development hereby permitted shall begin before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

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

- 3 **Regulatory Condition:** The development hereby approved shall be used only for the purpose of storage and distribution of clean food waste bins in connection with commercial and residential properties served by Horsham District Council.

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

- 4 **Regulatory Condition:** Any items stored/stacked within the site shall not exceed a total height of 3m.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the nearby neighbouring properties and 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 with the permission of the Local Planning Authority by way of formal application.

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