Horsham District Council

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:
DC/25/2013
Floodgates Stables, Castle Lane, West Grinstead, West Sussex, RH13 8LH

DESCRIPTION:
Change of use of stables in to offices (Use Class E(g)(i)) and associated alterations.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:
No relevant planning history

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE
The application site is located to the west of the A24 (Worthing Road and to the north of Castle Lane, located to the north of the unclassified settlement of Dial Post. The site is located outside of the Built-Up Area Boundary and is therefore located within the countryside for planning purposes. The site is not within a Conservation Area and there are no statutory or locally listed buildings within the locality. The application building is located within a small cluster of buildings, with numerous uses and surrounded by equestrian and agricultural fields.

A number of commercial and industrial buildings/units are located approximately 67 metres to the southeast, with residential properties located approximately 28 metres to the northeast and 44 metres to the south.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION
This application seeks full planning consent for the change of use of stables into offices within a Use Class E (g)(i), with associated alterations. The redundant stables will be converted into 3 office spaces, a reception with welfare facilities and a bathroom. The external alterations include the removal of the existing chimney and fenestration changes, including new window openings and replacement doors.

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 7 - Strategic Policy: Economic Growth
Policy 9 - Employment Development
Policy 10 - Rural Economic Development
Policy 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles
Policy 35 - Strategic Policy: Climate Change
Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport
Policy 41 - Parking

Shipley Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2031
Policy Ship HD3: High quality design
Policy Ship CO2: Employment

Shipley Parish Design Statement

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF requires that all development plans complete their reviews no later than 5 years from their adoption. Horsham District Council is currently in the process of reviewing its development plan however at this stage the emerging policies carry only limited weight in decision making. As the HDPF is now over 5 years old, the most important policies for the determination of this application must be considered as to whether they are 'out of date' (NPPF paragraph 11d). This includes, for applications involving the provision of housing, whether the Council can demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites (NPPF footnote 8).

The Council is currently unable to demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites, with the supply currently calculated as being 1 year. The presumption in favour of development within Paragraph 11d) of the NPPF therefore applies in the consideration of all applications for housing development within the District (unless footnote 7 or Paragraph 14 applies to relevant applications), with Policies 2, 4, 15 and 26 now carrying only moderate weight in decision making.

All other policies within the HDPF as itemised above have been assessed against the NPPF and are considered to be consistent such that they continue to attract significant weight in decision making.

Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19):
Strategic Policy 1: Sustainable Development
Strategic Policy 2: Development Hierarchy
Strategic Policy 6: Climate Change
Strategic Policy 8: Sustainable Design and Construction
Strategic Policy 9: Water Neutrality
Strategic Policy 14: Countryside Protection
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 29: New Employment
Policy 31: Rural Economic Development
Policy 32: Conversion of Agricultural and Rural Buildings to Commercial, Community and Residential Uses

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:
INTERNAL CONSULTATIONS
HDC Environmental Health: No Objection, recommend that the site is restricted to office use only. Plans requested relating to proposed external plant and/or external lighting.

OUTSIDE AGENCIES
WSCC Highways: No Objection: -

It is not expected that the proposed offices will generate a significant increase in traffic levels over the existing permitted use. Parking has not been shown on any submitted plans and is stated as 2 on the Application Form. Electronic mapping shows there is space within the site, in front of the stables for additional parking. Please request the applicant to provide a plan showing the parking with a minimum of 3 spaces. No highway objection subject to a pre-occupation condition.

Representations:
None received

Parish Comments:
Shipley Parish Council: Support

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 situated outside of the Built-Up Area Boundary and therefore lies within a countryside location for the purposes of planning policy, as such Policy 26, countryside protection, of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), applies.

Policy 26 of the HDPF seeks to protect the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside against inappropriate development. Any proposal must be essential to its countryside location, and in addition, meet one or more additional criteria. Such criteria relate to the needs of agriculture or forestry, the extraction of minerals or disposal of waste, quiet informal recreational use or the sustainable development of rural areas. Policy 26, further, requires that proposals must be of a scale appropriate to their countryside character and location, and requires that development does not lead to a significant increase in overall activity in the countryside on a cumulative or individual basis while further preserving the character of its respective setting.

Policy 7 of the HDPF states that sustainable development in the District will be achieved by: redevelopment, regeneration, intensification and smart growth of existing employment sites; the formation and development of small, start-up and move-on business, as well as home working and home based businesses, by encouraging provision of small units through development proposals; and identifying additional employments areas to meet the need for appropriate new business activity.

Policy 10 of the HDPF supports sustainable rural economic development and enterprise that generates local employment and wider economic, social and environmental benefits. In countryside locations, development is supported in principle where it maintains the quality and character of the area, is appropriate to its setting, contributes to the wider rural economy, and is contained within suitably located buildings appropriate for conversion, with the conversion of rural buildings to business or commercial uses supported in preference to residential use.

Policy CO2 of the Shipley Neighbourhood Plan supports employment development, including businesses and small-scale employment uses, particularly where proposals involve the reuse or conversion of existing rural buildings. The policy requires development to be well designed, accord with other development plan policies, and demonstrate how buildings and associated parking respond to the Shipley Parish Design Guidance and maintain the quality and character of the area.

The application site forms part of a small cluster of buildings comprising a mix of uses. A number of commercial, industrial and retail units are located to the south of this cluster, with sporadic residential

development also present, and the building subject of this application is located approximately 67 metres to the north. Whilst the proposal would involve a modest extension of the established commercial yard and therefore presents some conflict with Policy 10, this separation is minor, and given the proposal entails the reuse of an existing building the level of conflict with this policy would not amount to a reason to refuse the application.

The proposal involves the redevelopment of a redundant rural equestrian building to provide small-scale office accommodation within a suitably located existing building, which is appropriate in scale to its countryside setting. Given the limited scale of the development and the minimal external alterations proposed, it is not considered that the scheme would lead to a significant increase in overall activity in the countryside or harm the character of the area. On balance, the proposal is considered acceptable in principle and to accord with Policies 7, 10 and 26 of the HDPF and Policy CO2 of the Shipley Neighbourhood Plan.

Design and Appearance:

Policies 25, 32 and 33 of the HDPF promote development that is of a high-quality design, which is sympathetic to the character and distinctiveness of the site and surroundings. The landscape character of the area should be protected, conserved and enhanced, with proposals contributing to a sense of place through appropriate scale, massing and appearance.

Policy 3 of the SNP requires new development to respond positively to local design characteristics and features, as set out in the Shipley Parish Design Guidance, and to be of a size and scale that respects and, where possible, enhances the character of the area. The policy also seeks the use of materials that are typical of the locality.

The proposal involves minor external changes to the building's appearance. External alterations include the removal of the chimney and fenestration alterations, including new window openings and replacement doors. The fenestration alterations will use materials that match those of the existing building, with the stable doors being retained and windows upgraded.

Given the minor nature of the alterations, the proposal is considered appropriate to the character and appearance of the existing building and would not result in harm to the character or appearance of the conservation area or the wider area. The visual impact of the proposal is therefore considered acceptable and in accordance with the above policies.

Residential Amenity:

Policy 33 of the HDPF requires that new development should not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of occupiers of nearby property and land through overlooking or noise, whilst having regard to the sensitives of surrounding development.

It is acknowledged that the development would result in an increased level of activity on the site, however, given the scale of the building and the proposed use, this level of activity would not be detrimental to neighbouring amenity. Where additional windows are located, these are situated at ground floor level and on elevations that no harmful overlooking would result from the arrangement.

It is considered that given the nature of this current application and the context of the site and locality, no unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity would arise, subject to the recommended conditions.

Highways Impacts:

Policy 40 of the HDPF refers to the commitment to provide a community connected by a sustainable transport system. The location of the development on the edge of Broadbridge Heath has already been accepted and in terms of its proximity to the facilities available within the village is considered a sustainable location for new development. Policy 41 seeks to ensure that sufficient parking is provided in accordance with specified standards.

The proposal does not incorporate any alterations to the existing access arrangement, in which WSCC Highways have confirmed that the use of the building as offices will not generated a significant increase in traffic levels. There is sufficient space within site boundaries for manoeuvring, and given the extent of hardstanding to the south of the building, there are no concerns in respect of parking, albeit that details are sought by way of a condition. With this and the above in mind, the application is considered in accordance with Polices 40 and 41 of the HDPF, subject to the satisfaction of the attached parking condition.

Water Neutrality:

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.

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.

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

- The development qualifies as 'de minimis' under Regulation 4 of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024

Conclusions:

The development is considered to accord with relevant local and national planning polices and is therefore recommended for approval.

Recommendation: Application Permitted

Conditions:

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 **Pre-Occupation Condition**: The use hereby permitted shall not commence until a plan showing the layout of car parking provision has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The use shall not commence until the parking spaces have been provided in accordance with the approved details. The areas of land so provided shall thereafter be retained for the parking of vehicles.

Reason: To ensure that adequate and satisfactory provision is made for the parking of vehicles clear of all highways in accordance with Policy 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

4 **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).

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).

6 **Regulatory Condition**: No works for the implementation of the development hereby approved shall take place outside of 08:00 hours to 18:00 hours Mondays to Fridays and 08:00 hours to 13:00 hours on Saturdays nor at any time on Sundays, Bank or public Holidays

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

7 **Regulatory Condition:** The development hereby permitted shall not be open or in use except between the hours of 08:00 - 18:00 Monday to Friday, 08:00 -13:00 hours on Saturday and at no time on Sundays or Bank / Public Holidays.

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

8 **Regulatory Condition**: Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order amending or revoking and/or re-enacting that Order), the premises hereby permitted shall be used for Class E(g)(i), and for no other purposes whatsoever, (including those falling within Class E as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification) without express planning consent from the Local Planning Authority first being obtained.

Reason: Changes of use as permitted by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order or Use Classes Order 1987 are not considered appropriate in this case due to the site's countryside location and the relationship with surrounding uses and land, in accordance with Policies 26, 31 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

NOTE TO APPLICANT

Biodiversity Net Gain Condition

Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 states that planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the "biodiversity gain condition" which means development granted by this notice must not begin unless:

(a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
(b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

Under Regulations 4, 5, 7 & 8 of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024 the statutory biodiversity gain condition required by Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) does not apply in relation to planning permission for development which:

1. does not impact an onsite priority habitat (a habitat specified in a list published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and
impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat (a hedgerow habitat or watercourse habitat identified for the purposes of the biodiversity metric);

2. is the subject of a householder application within the meaning of article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015;

3. is undertaken solely or mainly for the purpose of fulfilling, in whole or in part, the biodiversity gain planning condition which applies in relation to another development (In determining whether a development is undertaken solely or mainly for this purpose, no account is to be taken of any facility for the public to access or to use the site for educational or recreational purposes, if that access or use is permitted without the payment of a fee);

4. consists of no more than 9 dwellings, is carried out on a site which has an area no larger than 0.5 hectares, and consists exclusively of dwellings which are self-build or custom housebuilding ("Self-build or custom housebuilding" has the same meaning as in section 1(A1) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended)).

In addition, the Biodiversity Gain Plan Condition does not apply to applications for major development made before 12 February 2024, or non-major development made before 2 April 2024.

Based on the information submitted in the planning application documents, the Planning Authority considers that this permission is exempt from biodiversity net gain, and as such does not require approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun.

Statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. These can be found at Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 74-003-20240214 of the Planning Practice Guidance, which can be found at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain.

Irreplaceable habitat
If the onsite habitat includes irreplaceable habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans.

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/25/2013
(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
Location plan		D 0825/760/01A	05.12.2025
Elevation plan	Proposed Elevations	D 0825/760/07	05.12.2025
Roof plan	Existing and Proposed Roofplans	D 0825/760/05	05.12.2025
Elevation plan	Existing Elevations	D 0825/760/06	05.12.2025
Floor plan	Existing Ground Floor Stables and Yard Buildings	D 0825/760/03	05.12.2025
Floor plan	Proposed Ground Floor Stables and Yard Buildings	D 0825/760/04 A	05.12.2025
Block plan		D 0825/760/02	05.12.2025

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Sam Nye Date: 28/01/2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial Guy Everest Date: 30.01.2026