Horsham District Council

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:
DC/25/0422
35-37, Springfield Road, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 2PG

DESCRIPTION:
Siting of a storage container.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/22/0015 Stationing of a temporary storage container (Retrospective). Application Permitted 8.3.2022

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The application site is located on the western side of Springfield Road. The commercial property is a flat roof, single storey warehouse situated at the rear of 35-37 Springfield Road. The application site is located in the Horsham built up area, but it does not fall within a Conservation Area. Nor is the property a Listed Building.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

The proposal seeks an extension of the planning permission for the stationing of a temporary storage container (retrospective) previously permitted under planning ref. DC/22/0015 of which temporary permission expired on 25 March 2025.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES
The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):
Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development
Policy 7 - Strategic Policy: Economic Growth
Policy 9 - Employment Development
Policy 24 - Strategic Policy: Environmental Protection
Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles

Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19):
Strategic Policy 1: Sustainable Development
Strategic Policy 4: Horsham Town
Strategic Policy 6: Climate Change
Strategic Policy 11: Environmental Protection
Strategic Policy 13: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Strategic Policy 19: Development Quality
Strategic Policy 20: Development Principles

Neighbourhood Plan:
Horsham Blueprint Business Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2036
Policy HB1 – Location of Development
Policy HB3 – Character of Development
Policy HB4 – Design of Development
Policy HB9 – Protecting Existing and Encouraging New Commercial Premises and Land

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:

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:

Policy 9 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) states that the expansion of existing employment sites and premises within the built-up area boundary will be supported where the business requirements cannot be met within the existing site/premises through acceptable on-site expansion or intensification.

Policy HB9 of the Horsham Blueprint Business Neighbourhood Plan states that proposals that support or enhance existing businesses delivering a net gain in employment in sustainable locations and enabling businesses to grow will be supported.

Retrospective planning permission was granted ref. DC/22/0015 to site this storage container to provide additional space to store carpets for a temporary period up to 25 March 2025 with the requirement stated as due to the current works levels until alternative solutions, including an extension to the existing warehouse, is considered. This current application seeks permission to extend the period to site the existing storage container. The planning statement submitted states that the original intention was to have plans and funds in place to replace with a permanent unit on the same site, but unfortunately due to unforeseen financial circumstances the project has been put on hold until funds permit. It is set out that the container for dry storage for carpet rolls is still required. The storage container is still required to provide additional space to store carpets prior to installation. As such an extension of the temporary permission is requested.

The proposal would provide additional storage space for the established commercial premises, where a need has been identified. The application site is located within the built-up area where there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and it has been identified that the business requirements necessitate additional storage need beyond the existing premises. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in principle, subject to all other material considerations.

Character and Appearance:

Policy 32 and 33 of the HDPF seeks to ensure that development promotes a high standard and quality of design in order to enhance and protect locally distinctive characters. The policies also seek to ensure that the scale, massing and appearance of development relates sympathetically with the built surroundings, landscape, open spaces and routes within and adjoining the site, including any impact on the skyline and important views.

This is a retrospective application which involves the siting of a temporary storage container. The shipping container is of metal structure with a height of 2.5 metres, a width of 2.4 metres and a depth of 6 metres. The proposal is situated in between the existing warehouse building and the rear of a garage block.

The proposal would serve an existing commercial unit providing temporary storage facility. The storage unit would be acceptable in this location surrounded by commercial premises. The proposal would be adequately screened by the existing garage block, and would be read in this context. The development would not therefore cause visual impact along Springfield Road. Whilst the storage container can be viewed from the rear gardens of the residential properties to the north, the proposal would be viewed in context of the existing commercial surroundings and the existing warehouse unit. The applicant has confirmed that the siting of the shipping container is temporary until the existing warehouse building is extended (subject to obtaining planning permission). Due to the temporary nature of the development, the proposal is considered acceptable.

Overall, it is considered that the proposal would not be harmful to the character an appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area with an extension of the temporary permission previously permitted.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity:

Policy 33 of the HDPF states that permission will be granted for development that does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of the occupiers/users of nearby properties and land.

Initial concerns were raised in terms of the increased level of activities that would be caused by the additional storage unit. It is recognised that the proposal would serve an existing commercial unit, providing associated storage for the established enterprise. While this would increase storage space, it is not considered that the provision of an additional storage unit would materially intensify the level of activity nor worsen the situation that already exists. Furthermore, any loss of light would be similar to the obstruction created by the normal use of the site for parking large vans. For the reasons set out above, it is considered that the proposal is sufficiently distanced, orientated and scaled so as not to have an unacceptable effect on the amenities of the neighbouring properties.

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.

The development would offer additional storage space in association with the established enterprise. This would be for a temporary period, where the Planning Statement confirms that the container would be utilised to store carpets for customers. Given this use, it is considered that there is no clear or compelling evidence to suggest the nature and scale of the proposed development would result in a more intensive occupation of the dwelling 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 development qualifies as 'de minimis' under Regulation 4 of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024

Conclusions:

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

Recommendation: Application Permitted

Conditions:

2 **Time Condition**: The storage container hereby permitted shall be removed and the land shall be restored to its former condition on or before the 25 March 2027.

Reason: The proposed development is not considered satisfactory as a permanent measure in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

3 **Regulatory Condition**: The storage container hereby permitted shall be used for ancillary storage purposes in association with the main commercial building known as C Berwick and Sons, Rear of Springfield House, Springfield Road, Horsham, and shall not be used as a separate trade or business unit.

Reason: To restrict the use of the premises to one compatible with the surrounding area and to enable the Local Planning Authority to exercise control over any future use not forming part of this application.

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/25/0422
Schedule of plans/documents **approved**:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Site plan		NONE	19.03.2025
Elevation & Floor plan	Roof	NONE	19.03.2025
Location plan		NONE	19.03.2025
Supporting Statement	Planning	NONE	21.03.2025

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Steve Astles Date: 09.05.2025

Authorising Officer sign/initial RHERMITAGE Date: 14.05.2025