Horsham District Council

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:
DC/24/1265
Unit 1, Old Mill Square, Storrington, Pulborough, West Sussex, RH20 4NQ

DESCRIPTION:
Change of use from vacant bank (Class E) to hot food takeaway (sui generis). Installation of extract and ventilation equipment, replacement shopfront and other minor external alterations.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

HRA/22/0017	Application under Regulation 77 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 in respect of Prior Approval consent DC/22/0626.	Application Refused on 22.08.2022
DC/22/0626	Prior Notification for Change of Use from Commercial (Use Class E) to residential (Use Class C3) to form 1no. dwelling.	Prior Approval Required and PERMITTED on 17.05.2022
HRA/23/0006	Application under Regulation 77 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 in respect of Prior Approval consent DC/22/0626.	Application Permitted on 18.04.2023
DC/23/0506	Non-Material Amendment to previously approved application DC/20/0859 (Prior Approval for a Proposed Change of Use to convert office to 5 self-contained flats) to allow for the removal of shared access corridor to flat 13, 14, 15 and 16 and the amendment of access/egress to flat 13, 15 and 16.	Application Refused on 10.05.2023

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The application site comprises Unit 1, Old Mill Square, a vacant ground-floor commercial premises located within the central part of Storrington Village. The unit forms part of a small, established shopping centre accessed from Old Mill Drive and is situated within the Primary Shopping Frontage as defined by the Horsham District Planning Framework. The premises were formerly occupied by Barclays Bank (Use Class E) and have remained vacant since January 2022. The building is part single-storey and part two-storey in form, with the ground floor now subject to subdivision.

The unit fronts northwards onto the internal pedestrianised courtyard of Old Mill Square, with the western elevation facing Old Mill Drive. The site has a service yard to the rear and is surrounded by other Class E commercial uses, including a Waitrose supermarket and independent retailers. Adjacent units include retail and office uses, and the upper floor of the building have been granted consent for residential conversion. The site lies adjacent to but outside the Storrington Conservation Area and falls within Flood Zone 1, with the southwestern corner bordering Flood Zone 3. Several public car parks and on-street parking options are located nearby, and the site benefits from good accessibility by foot, cycle and public transport.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

The application seeks full planning permission for the change of use of Unit 1 from a vacant Class E commercial use (formerly a bank) to a hot food take-away (Sui Generis use class), together with minor external alterations to facilitate the new use. The proposal includes the installation of extraction and

ventilation equipment, air handling units, and condensers with anti-vibration mounts, primarily on the rear elevation.

The shopfront on the northern elevation is proposed to be replaced with a dark grey powder-coated aluminium frontage and entrance door. A new steel-faced rear access door and stepped access would also be installed, along with louvred vents on the rear elevation to accommodate the ventilation system. A notice board is proposed to replace the existing parish board. The proposal is intended to facilitate occupation of the unit by Domino's Pizza UK & Ireland Ltd.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):
Policy 7 - Strategic Policy: Economic Growth
Policy 9 - Employment Development
Policy 12 - Strategic Policy: Vitality and Viability of Existing Retail Centres
Policy 13 - Town Centre Uses
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles
Policy 34 - Cultural and Heritage Assets

Neighbourhood Plan:
Storrington, Sullington & Washington Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2031

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

Supplementary Planning Document:
Storrington Old Mill Drive Diamond Planning Brief

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: Comment - The units within Old Mill Square are located adjoining but outside of the Storrington Conservation Area. The application unit faces onto Old Mill Drive, and also north into the shopping area. My key concern with regards to the application is the proposed changes to the western elevation and the appliance of vinyl to the glazing. This would introduce a blank frontage to the unit and reduce the interaction between the unit and the wider streetscene. This loss of active street frontage would not be sensitive to the historic character and appearance of the adjoining conservation area.

HDC Environmental Health: No Objection/Comment - The Environmental Health & Licensing Team has reviewed the application to convert a vacant bank into a hot food takeaway. While the proposal includes systems to manage kitchen odour and noise, there are concerns about the effectiveness and clarity of the plans. The odour control system is considered necessary due to nearby homes, but the technical details are unclear and may not meet recommended standards. The team objects to the application until more detailed plans are provided.

The noise assessment is acceptable, but conditions are recommended to ensure noise levels stay within limits after installation. Regular maintenance of all equipment should also be required. To reduce disruption during construction, the team suggests conditions such as safe asbestos removal, proper waste disposal, no burning on site, and restricted working hours.

Re-consultation (received 05.11.2024): No Objection/Comment - Following the submission of additional information by the applicant's agent, the Environmental Health & Licensing Team has reviewed the updated extraction system design. It now includes activated carbon filters with a 0.4-second residence time, which meets the required guidance for odour control. However, the applicant is advised to ensure that the air temperature drops below 40°C before reaching the carbon filters, as higher temperatures could reduce their effectiveness.

The team also highlights the importance of properly installing anti-vibration mounts, noting a previous case where poor installation caused significant disturbance to nearby residents.

With the updated design and the previously recommended conditions in place, the Service now has no objection to the application.

Re-consultation (received 16.12.2024): No Objection - The Environmental Health & Licensing Team has reviewed the proposed waste management plan and finds it satisfactory. However, due to the nearby residential properties, they recommend that waste collections should only take place during daytime hours. This restriction should be secured by a planning condition if the application is approved.

Natural England: No Objection – Subject to mitigation being secured

WSCC Highways: No Objection - 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 115), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.

WSCC Lead Local Flood Authority: No Comment

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS:

Representations:
None Received

Parish Comments:
Storrington, Sullington and Washington Parish Council: Neutral Comment - Concerns regarding parking for collections and additional litter.

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 lies within the defined Storrington Village Centre and the Primary Shopping Frontage as designated in the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF, 2015). Policy 12 of the HDPF seeks to support the hierarchy of retail centres through encouraging a range of uses that maintain or enhance their vitality and viability. In addition, Policy 13 supports town centre uses within defined centre boundaries, provided they are of an appropriate scale, enhance the character and function of the centre, and contribute positively to its vibrancy.

The Neighbourhood Plan reinforces this approach under Policy 5, which supports the retention of primary retail areas for a broad range of former Class A uses, including takeaways. While the proposed hot food takeaway falls under Sui Generis use class, it aligns with the general intent of this poli-cy to support active ground floor uses that contribute to the vitality of the high street.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides further support for the proposal. Paragraph 8 outlines the three objectives of sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental. The proposal would bring a vacant unit back into active commercial use, creating local employment opportunities and enhancing footfall, thereby contributing positively to both the economic and social objectives of the Framework. Paragraph 85 supports planning decisions to support the role town centres play at the heart of communities.

Furthermore, Paragraph 11 of the NPPF establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Given that the proposal accords with the adopted development plan and would secure an active and viable use within a vacant premises in a sustainable town centre location, the presumption applies. Paragraph 91 also confirms that planning decisions should enable the sustainable growth and adaptation of centres, which this proposal clearly facilitates by securing the re-use of an underutilised commercial unit.

In addition, Paragraph 97 of the NPPF states:

Local planning authorities should refuse applications for hot food takeaways and fast food outlets:

> *a) within walking distance of schools and other places where children and young people congregate, unless the location is within a designated town centre; or*
> *b) in locations where there is evidence that a concentration of such uses is having an adverse impact on local health, pollution or anti-social-behaviour.*

Whilst the site may well be within walking distance of a local school, or a place where children and young people congregate, it is within a defined town centre, and forms part of the Storrington Town Centre and main shopping area, as set out within Policy 13 of the HDPF. The proposed change of use, therefore, does not represent a conflict with the provisions of the NPPF.

Overall, the proposed change of use to a hot food takeaway is considered to be in accordance with Policies 12 and 13 of the HDPF, Policy 5 of the Neighbourhood Plan, and the provisions of the NPPF 2024. It would provide a beneficial town centre use in a sustainable location, support economic activity, and enhance the vibrancy of the centre without undermining its char-acter or retail function.

Design and Appearance:

Policies 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) indicate that new development should be of a high standard of design and layout, with regard to natural and built surroundings, in terms of its scale, density, massing, siting, materials, orientation and character. Policy 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) states, development should enhance its historic environment through positive management of development affecting heritage assets. Development which would have an adverse impact on the setting or special architectural character or appearance of a listed building will not be supported.

The proposed external alterations are limited in scale and are designed to facilitate the change of use of the unit. These works include the installation of a new aluminium shopfront with a powder-coated dark grey finish to replace the existing frontage. The design is modern and functional, aligning with the wider commercial character of Old Mill Square, which features a variety of contemporary retail frontages. The new shopfront and signage panel are not considered out of keeping with the established design of the centre and maintain active frontages facing the pedestrian shopping area.

Heritage Impacts:

The western elevation, which faces Old Mill Drive, would be refurbished and repainted, and a new noticeboard is proposed to replace the existing parish board. These measures would provide a visual uplift to the side elevation, although the addition of vinyl glazing and equipment on this elevation should be carefully managed to avoid creating an overly blank or inactive frontage. Concerns raised by the Council's Conservation Officer in relation to the reduction in visual permeability and interaction with the street scene are noted.

However, the site lies outside the designated Storrington Conservation Area and the proposed alterations are not considered to materially harm the character or appearance of the adjacent heritage asset or its setting. As such, the proposal is considered to satisfy the provisions of Policy 34, which seeks to ensure that development protects and reinforces the special character of heritage assets and their wider townscape setting.

Alterations to the rear of the unit, including new louvre vents, a replacement access door, stepped access, and the installation of low-level condensers, are functional in nature and will be largely screened from public view. The use of appropriate materials and anti-vibration mounts for plant equipment is supported and will help mitigate any visual or noise impact.

Overall, the design and appearance of the proposed alterations are considered appropriate to their setting within a modern shopping centre. The works are modest in scale, respect the existing character and architectural form of the building, and would not result in harm to the adjacent conservation area or the visual amenity of the wider area. The proposal therefore accords with Policies 32, 33, and 34 of the HDPF.

Residential Amenity:

Policy 33 of the HDPF states that development should consider the scale, massing and orientation between buildings, respecting the amenities and sensitivities of neighbouring properties.

Given the nature and scale of the development and its relationship with the surrounding built form, the proposal would not be considered to result in unacceptable harm.

Highways Impacts:

Policy 40 of the HDPF requires that development provides safe and suitable access and does not cause unacceptable highway impacts. Paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024) states that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

The proposal is for converting a vacant bank into a hot food takeaway, including installation of ventilation equipment and minor external changes. The site is on Old Mill Drive, a 30mph road. The LHA previously raised no highway safety concerns for a similar application, which was approved.

There is no vehicle access or on-site parking, but a rear service area is available for deliveries. Parking would rely on nearby on-street or paid options, which are well-regulated to prevent unsafe parking. The LHA does not expect the change of use to significantly increase traffic or cause parking or safety issues.

Given the site's sustainable location with good walking, cycling, and public transport access, the LHA concludes the proposal would not negatively impact highway safety or the road network. Therefore, there are no transport-related reasons to object.

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) 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 proposed change of use from a vacant bank (Class E) to a hot food takeaway (Sui Generis) is acceptable in principle and aligns with both local and national planning policies promoting town centre vitality. The design changes are modest and sympathetic to the setting, with no significant harm identified to heritage assets, residential amenity, or highway safety. Appropriate conditions and legal agreements will secure necessary mitigation relating to noise, odour, waste, and water neutrality. The application 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**: Prior to the commencement of the use hereby permitted the ventilation and extraction equipment shall be installed and fully operational in accordance with the submitted details. The ventilation and extraction equipment shall thereafter be maintained in strict accordance with the approved details.

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

4 **Regulatory Condition**: The materials to be used for the external works permitted shall strictly accord with those indicated on the drawing number: 13780-AEW-PJ005936-XX-DR-0004, REV A

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to control the development in detail in the interests of visual amenity and in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

5 **Regulatory Condition**: No works relating to the construction 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, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

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

6 **Regulatory Condition**: The premises hereby permitted to use as a hot food takeaway shall not operate a counter sales service except between the hours of 1100 - 2300 daily (including Bank Holidays).

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

7 **Regulatory Condition**: The premises hereby permitted to use as a hot food takeaway shall not operate a takeaway delivery service except between the hours of 1100-2300 Monday-Sundays (including Bank Holidays).

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

8 **Regulatory Condition**: No deliveries shall take place to the premises hereby approved for use as a hot food takeaway except between the hours of 0800 - 1800 Monday to Saturdays and 1000 - 1600 on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

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

9 **Regulatory Condition**: The use hereby permitted shall operate in accordance with the submitted Waste Management Plan R003V1 (received 10.12.2024). No collection of waste shall occur before 0700 Monday-Saturday inclusive.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the area 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/24/1265

Schedule of plans/documents **approved**:

Plan Type	**Description**	**Drawing Number**	**Received Date**
Supporting Statement	Plant Noise Assessment	NONE	20.08.2024
Supporting Statement	Specification and EMAQ Report	NONE	20.08.2024
Design & Access Statement		NONE	20.08.2024
Supporting Statement	Water Neutrality	NONE	20.08.2024
Supporting Statement	Annex C	NONE	20.08.2024
Supporting Statement		NONE	20.08.2024
Block plan		13780-AEW-PJ005936-XX-DR-0006 REV A	20.08.2024
Location plan		13780-AEW-PJ005936-XX-DR-0005 REV A	20.08.2024
Elevation plan	Proposed	13780-AEW-PJ005936-XX-DR-0004 REV A	20.08.2024
Floor plan	Proposed	13780-AEW-PJ005936-00-DR-0003 REV B	01.11.2024
Elevation plan	Existing	13780-AEW-PJ005936-XX-DR-0002 REV A	20.08.2024
Floor plan	Existing	13780-AEW-PJ005936-00-DR-0001 REV A	20.08.2024
Supporting Statement	Waste Management Plan	R003V1	10.12.2024

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial	Shazia Penne	Date:	04.08.2025
Authorising Officer sign/initial	RHERMITAGE	Date:	05.08.2025