Horsham District Council

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:
DC/24/0342
Newbridge Nurseries, Billingshurst Road, Broadbridge Heath, West Sussex, RH12 3LN

DESCRIPTION:
The installation of a substation to serve EV Charging Hubs

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/16/2250	Demolition of existing bungalow, garage, retail and storage buildings and erection of a glasshouse to provide additional covered garden centre sales space, replacement goods in building with yard area, replacement and upgraded horticultural plant shades, surface and improved parking and additional landscaping	Application Permitted on 27.01.2017
DISC/17/0124	Approval of details reserved by conditions 8, 10 and 17 on DC/16/2250	Split Decision on 30.05.2017
DISC/17/0219	Approval of details reserved by conditions 3, 13, 14, 15, 17 (additional information) and 18 on DC/16/2250	Application Permitted on 25.07.2017
DISC/17/0234	Approval of details reserved by conditions 4 (CEMP) and 16 (SuDS) on DC/16/2250	Application Permitted on 18.08.2017
DISC/22/0049	Approval of details reserved by Condition 9 (Landscaping) to approved application DC/16/2250	Application Refused on 12.05.2022
DISC/22/0181	Approval of details reserved by condition 9 (Landscaping) to approved application DC/16/2250	Application Permitted on 28.11.2023
DC/22/2027	Non Material Amendment to previously approved application DC/16/2250 (Demolition of existing bungalow, garage, retail and storage buildings and erection of a glasshouse to provide additional covered garden centre sales space, replacement goods in building with yard area, replacement and upgraded horticultural plant shades, surface and improved parking and additional landscaping) to allow for amended layout to front car park.	Application Permitted on 28.11.2023
DC/23/0237	Installation of electric vehicle charging hubs and associated infrastructure.	Withdrawn Application on 29.01.2024

SITE AND SURROUNDS

The site lies within the settlement confines of Broadbridge Heath with the boundary running along the rear and eastern most boundaries of the site. Flood Zones 2 and 3 run along the rear boundary of the site. The site abouts residential development to the south-east and to the north lies the dual carriageway and then more housing forming part of the Countryside site. The site itself is broadly flat with planting along the boundary with the residential scheme.

The existing garden centre buildings are concentrated in the western and rear parts of the site with the land to the front and on the eastern side of the site being used for parking. The front and western side of the site are separated from the highway by the green strip of land with some tree planting.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The application seeks permission to install a substation to the north-eastern side of the site confined to a dedicated space.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES
The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):
Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development
Policy 3 - Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy
Policy 9 - Employment Development
Policy 13 - Town Centre Uses
Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles
Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport
Policy 41 - Parking

Neighbourhood Plan:
None

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:

WSCC Highways: No Objection - This application seeks the installation of a substation to serve EV charging hubs. One car parking space will be lost as a part of the proposed works – however, the loss of one parking space will likely have negligible impact, given the site exhibits ample parking within the existing car park.

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 115), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.

Nature Space Consultant: No Objection - The proposed development is not considered to be relevant to the District Licensing Scheme in this case and we consider there would be no likely impact on great

crested newts or their habitats. I therefore have no comments to make at this time. If the proposal changes, then please seek further advice from me if necessary.

Parish Comments:
No Objection

Representations:
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

The application has been assessed on the basis of the submitted details, together with the planning history of the site and adjoining properties, available images and photographs supplied by the agent. These details were considered sufficient to allow the application to be properly considered and determined.

Principle of Development:

Policy 3 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) states development will be permitted within towns and villages which have defined built-up areas. Any infilling and redevelopment will be required to demonstrate that this is of an appropriate nature and scale to maintain characteristics and function of the settlement in accordance with the settlement hierarchy.

Policy 42 of the HDPF states that positive measures which help create a socially inclusive and adaptable environment for a range of occupiers and users to meet their long-term needs will be encouraged and supported. Account will be taken of the need to address the requirements stemming from, among others, the co-ordination, or services to fulfil the needs of young people.

The proposed development relates to construction of an electrical substation within the part of a wider hard surface car park which provides parking for customers of Newbridge Nurseries Garden Centre, to increase the current electrical load to facilitate EV Charging Hubs already approved. Without the installation of this substation, the delivery of ultra-rapid electric vehicle charging hubs at this garden centre will not be achievable. The proposed substation will be located to the northern edge of the existing front car park, adjacent to an area of existing landscaping. This location is also to the north east of where the row of approved EV charging bays are proposed. The substation will be surrounded by 10 X standard bollards to ensure that it is protected from potential vehicle damage.

The siting of the development would not affect the existing car park and would improve the quality and offer of the existing facilities and would be designed to accommodate the needs and requirements of a range of users. The proposed development is considered to result in public benefit, enabling a social

inclusive and adaptable environment for a range of users. The development is therefore considered acceptable in principle, subject to all other material considerations.

Character and Appearance

Policies 25, 32, and 33 of the HDPF promote development that protects, conserves, and enhances the townscape character from inappropriate development. Proposals should consider townscape characteristics, with development seeking to provide an attractive, functional, and accessible environment that complements the locally distinctive character of the district. Buildings should contribute to a sense of place, and should be of a scale, massing, and appearance that is of a high standard or design and layout which relates sympathetically to the landscape and built surroundings.

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area; are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping; are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting; establish a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit; optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development; and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible.

The proposed development would be located off the north-eastern boundary of the site and would to a total depth of 2.86m and overall width of 2.86m. The proposal would incorporate a flat roof with small pitch measuring to an overall height of 2.4m. The electrical substation would be finished in a metal container with 10x bollards surrounding the substation measuring at 1.20m in height.

While the electrical substation would result in additional mass and bulk to the north-eastern boundary of the enclosure on a semi-prominent location when viewed from the street, the proposed electrical substation is considered to be of a scale that would sit appropriately within the context. In addition, the site already comprises a number of structures forward of the principal elevation of the building, thus the addition would not appear out of context in this setting. The proposed development is therefore considered to be of a quality and form that would relate sympathetically to the character and visual amenities of the site and surroundings on balance, in accordance with Policies 25, 32, and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

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.

While the proposal would likely facilitate additional activity within and around the building, it is not considered that the proposal would result in a material intensification above the existing arrangement. Given the established use of the site, and its context within the built-up area, it is not considered that the proposal would result in any further unacceptable harm to the amenities and sensitivities of neighbouring properties and users of land, in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

Water Neutrality

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 180 and the Council's obligations under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Conclusion

The proposed development would improve the quality of the existing commercial centre and would enhance the offer to both the existing facility and a new range of users. The proposal would therefore support the needs of a variety of users and would provide public benefit in this regard. The scale, design and form of the addition is considered (on balance) to sit appropriately within the context. The resulting development would not result in harm to the amenities of neighbouring occupiers and users of land and would not result in a material intensification that would affect the function and safety of the highway network. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable and would accord with all relevant local and national planning policies.

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 **Regulatory Condition**: The materials to be used in the development hereby permitted shall strictly accord with those indicated on the application form and approved plans.

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).

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/24/0342
Schedule of plans/documents **approved**:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Site plan	Existing	E22-0156-P-011 REV B	05.03.2024
Location plan		E22-0156-P-010 REV A	29.02.2024
Site plan	Proposed	E22-0156-P-012 REV B	05.03.2024
Elevation & Floor plan	Proposed Substation	E22-0156-P-013 REV A	29.02.2024
Supporting Statement	planning	5155CA.L002	29.02.2024

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial	Shazia Penne	Date:	26.04.2024
Authorising Officer sign/initial	RHERMITAGE	Date:	30.04.2024