Horsham District Council

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:
DC/25/0473
56 High Street, Steyning, West Sussex, BN44 3RD

DESCRIPTION:
(Retrospective) Change of Use of existing outbuilding to use as ancillary accommodation to the existing dwelling (Full Application).

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/25/0474	Change of Use of existing outbuilding from Class E to residential domestic use as ancillary accommodation to the existing dwelling (Listed Building Consent).	Under Consideration
DC/18/0497 (LBC) DC/18/0496 (Full app)	Conversion of first floor into four self contained flats including a two storey first and second floor extension including addition of side terraces to north west elevations and conversion of attached outbuilding into a holiday let.	Permitted on 21/09/2018

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE
The application site lies to the east of High Street, accessed via a private access shared with number 56a and 58 High Street. The application sits in the context of a range of uses, with the area comprising commercial and residential uses. Many of the properties within the immediate and wider application site are Grade II listed properties. The building subject to this application has been used as an ancillary accommodation to number 56 High Street. The application site is within the Steyning Conservation area with frontage buildings onto the High Street Listed Buildings.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION
The application seeks permission for the easternmost section of the outbuilding to be used as ancillary accommodation to the existing dwelling at number 56 High Street. The use does not involve any external or internal alterations.

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 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
Policy 34 - Cultural and Heritage Assets
Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport

Policy 41 - Parking

Steyning Neighbourhood Plan
SDNP1 – Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
SNDP3 – Contribution to Character

Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19)
Strategic Policy 1: Sustainable Development
Strategic Policy 2: Development Hierarchy
Strategic Policy 9: Water Neutrality
Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 19: Development Quality
Policy 20: Development Principles
Policy 21: Heritage Assets and Managing Change within the Historic Environment
Policy 24: Sustainable Transport
Policy 25: Parking
Policy 29: New Employment
Policy 30: Enhancing Existing Employment
Policy 46: Ancillary Accommodation

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.

HDC Conservation: It would appear that the proposal would not result in physical changes to the historic building and therefore no objection would be raised in that respect. The building is likely to have a historic and functional link with the principal listed buildings and therefore the retention of this link would be supported.

It works are required to upgrade the building for building control purposes including thermal, sound and fire upgrades these could impact on the special interest of the listed building. Listed building consent would be required for any alteration that affects the building's special interest.

Representations:
No letters of representation received.

Parish Comments:
No objection provided it is used as ancillary accommodation to the existing dwelling.

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.

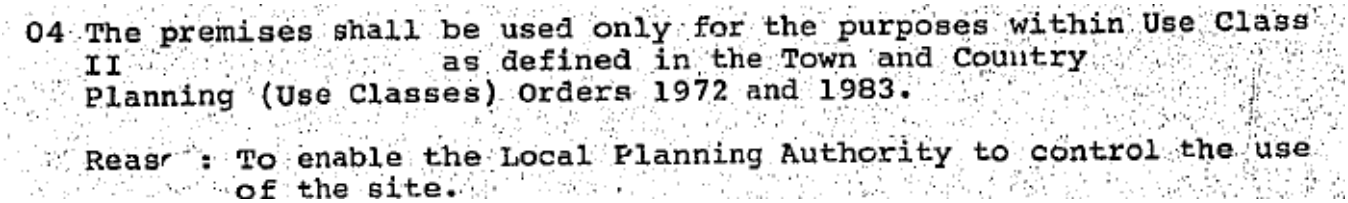
The application has also been considered in accordance with Horsham District Council's public sector equality duty, which seeks to prevent unlawful discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between people in a diverse community, in accordance with Section 149 of 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 western section of the barn, which falls within 60/62 High Street, originally provided ancillary storage in connection with use of the frontage buildings as a solicitor's office. This neighbouring part of the barn was subsequently converted to a holiday-let under application ref: DC/18/0496, with permission later granted for unrestricted residential use of the site, ref: DC/21/0979.

Planning permission ST/1/87 appears to relate to the eastern part of the building subject of this application and entailed 'conversion of store to office'. This permission was subject to the following condition: -


04 The premises shall be used only for the purposes within Use Class II as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Orders 1972 and 1983.

Reasr : To enable the Local Planning Authority to control the use of the site.

A dormer to the eastern elevation was added under permission ref: ST/116/90, with the floor plans indicating that the building was in use as an office. There has been no history which relates specifically to the outbuilding since this date, with DC/13/1164 authorising an enlarged incidental curtilage the red line of which included the outbuilding subject of this application.

There is no recent planning history or other evidence to support the notion that the outbuilding has been used for commercial accommodation, and it would not be possible to access the outbuilding other than through the residential property / curtilage. In reflection of this, it is noted that the outbuilding has been used in a manner akin to a home office, and this would arguably have been ancillary to the main dwelling rather than being an independent (Class E) planning unit in its own right.

The site layout has therefore materially changed since planning permission was originally granted for an office in the building. As such, while no information has been provided to suggest the building is redundant for employment generating use (within Class E), and this does create some conflict with Policy 9 of the HDPF, the change of use, given the above considerations, would not be considered to materially impact on the supply of office accommodation.

There is no objection to the use of the building in a manner ancillary to the main dwellinghouse, with this considered to be a suitable use having regard to its location and relationship with neighbouring properties and land. The external or internal layout of the building would not be altered, and given the access arrangements and shared garden / parking arrangements there is no evidence to suggest it would represent a self-contained residential unit.

Impact on 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.

As above, it is noted that the building provides all the facilities required for independent day to day living. The scale of the accommodation is though modest and the submitted plans do not indicate any separation of access / parking arrangements or amenity space. The application seeks an ancillary use and taking into account all relevant factors, as a matter of fact and degree it is considered the proposal would not be tantamount to the creation of an independent dwellinghouse. A condition is recommended to require the building be used solely for purposes ancillary to the main dwelling.

The proposal would not be expected to result in a greater level of activity than could otherwise take place at the site, and further no increased demand for travel to and from the site would be anticipated. Further, use in the manner proposed would not create significant potential for harmful levels of noise or disturbance.

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 outbuilding provides approximately 26 sq metres of floorspace. It is considered that use of this accommodation in a manner ancillary to the main dwelling, as appears to have been the case for an extended period of time, could not be evidenced as resulting in a more intensive occupation of the site, 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.

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).

There would be no increase in floorspace such that the development would benefit from an exemption from BNG requirements.

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 **Regulatory Condition**: The outbuilding shall be used solely for purposes ancillary to the occupation and enjoyment of 56 High Street, Steyning (as identified on the approved plans), and shall not be used as a separate unit of accommodation.

Reason: To ensure the development is water neutral to avoid an adverse impact on the Arun Valley SACSPA and Ramsar sites and as the establishment of an additional independent unit of accommodation would give rise to an over-intensive use of the site and lead to an unsatisfactory relationship between independent units of living accommodation, and in accordance with Policies 25, 31 and 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/25/0473
(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 & Block plan	Photos	22533 - 101	25.03.2025
Supporting Statement	Heritage	NONE	25.03.2025
Supporting Statement	Planning	NONE	25.03.2025
Supporting Statement	Water Neutrality	NONE	25.03.2025
Design & Access Statement		NONE	25.03.2025
Elevation & Floor plan		22533 - 102	08.04.2025

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Hannah Darley Date: 2nd June 2025

Authorising Officer sign/initial Guy Everest Date: 03.06.2025