



DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/26/0953
119 High Street, Steyning, West Sussex, BN44 3RE

DESCRIPTION:

Change of Use from a bakery, shop and residential flat to 4 no. residential units (3 x 2-bed flats and 1 x 2-bed maisonette) with associated alterations, including a hip to gable roof extension and addition of dormer windows.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

ST/54/80	New bakery (From old Planning History)	Application Permitted on 19.11.1980
ST/57/90	Extension to house new oven Site: The Model Bakery High St Steyning	Application Permitted on 18.07.1990
ST/14/01	Erection of carport Site: 119 High Street Steyning	Application Permitted on 13.03.2001
ST/32/03	Insertion of 2 oven flues in roof Site: 119 High Street Steyning	Application Permitted on 14.05.2003
DC/07/1457	Demolition of existing rear kitchen extension (Conservation Area Consent)	Application Refused on 22.08.2007
DC/07/1458	Change of use of existing bakery, shop and 3-bed flat to 3 x 3-bed houses and addition of 1 x new 3-bed townhouse, all with private amenity space and secure parking for one car per dwelling. Demolition of existing rear kitchen extension.	Application Refused on 22.08.2007
DC/08/1582	Demolition of existing bakery, shop and 3-bedroom flat and erection of 2 x 2-bed town houses and 1 x 3-bed town house with gardens and private parking (Full Planning)	Withdrawn Application on 12.01.2010

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The application site is located to the west of High Street and the north of St George's Place, within the built-up area of Steyning. The site comprises a detached two storey building comprising ground floor retail space and first floor residential, and is located on a corner plot within the designated Steyning Conservation Area.

The site is surrounded by predominantly residential dwellings, albeit that a mix of retail and commercial premises are located to the south-east of the site. The site is however located outside of the Steyning Town Centre as defined by Policy 13 of the HDPF.

A terrace of Locally Listed Buildings are sited to the west of the application site, with several Grade II Listed Buildings located to the east and south-east of the site.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

The application seeks full planning permission for the change of use and conversion of the building to 4no. residential units comprising 3no. 2-bed flats and 1no. 2-bed maisonette. The proposal would incorporate 2no. flats to the ground floor, 1no. flat to the first floor, and 1no. maisonette over the first and second floors.

The proposal would include building operations to install windows and doors to the elevations and extend the roof through a hip to gable extension and the addition of dormer windows to all elevations.

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 4 - Strategic Policy: Settlement Expansion
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 15 - Strategic Policy: Housing Provision
Policy 16 - Strategic Policy: Meeting Local Housing Needs
Policy 24 - Strategic Policy: Environmental Protection
Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles
Policy 34 - Cultural and Heritage Assets
Policy 35 - Strategic Policy: Climate Change
Policy 36 - Strategic Policy: Appropriate Energy Use
Policy 37 - Sustainable Construction
Policy 38 - Strategic Policy: Flooding
Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport
Policy 41 - Parking

Steyping Neighbourhood Development Plan (2019-2031):

SDNP1 – Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
SDNP2 – Responsible Environmental Design
SDNP3 – Contributing to Character

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 3: Settlement Expansion
Strategic Policy 6: Climate Change
Strategic Policy 7: Appropriate Energy Use
Strategic Policy 8: Sustainable Design and Construction
Strategic Policy 9: Water Neutrality
Strategic Policy 11: Environmental Protection
Strategic Policy 12: Air Quality
Strategic Policy 13: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Strategic Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Strategic Policy 19: Development Quality
Strategic Policy 20: Development Principles
Policy 21: Heritage Assets and Managing Change within the Historic Environment
Strategic Policy 24: Sustainable Transport
Policy 25: Parking
Strategic Policy 30: Enhancing Existing Employment
Strategic Policy 35: Town Centre Hierarchy and Sequential Approach
Strategic Policy 36: Town Centre Uses
Strategic Policy 37: Housing Provision
Strategic Policy 38: Meeting Local Housing Needs
Policy 40: Improving Housing Standards in the District

Supplementary Planning Guidance:

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

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:

INTERNAL CONSULTATIONS

HDC Conservation: No Objection

It would be considered that the proposed development would preserve the special historic and architectural interest of the Steyning Conservation Area. The site although within the wider setting of a number of listed buildings is appreciated within its townscape context. Due to this context including the road, it would be considered that the proposal would have a neutral impact on the setting of these heritage assets. No objection would therefore be raised. To ensure a high quality of development it would be suggested that details of the external materials are submitted, as well as details of the proposed fenestration.

HDC Drainage Engineer: Comment

The ground floor level is to be elevated by +650mm (0.6m = 2ft). Aside from this, there are no proposed alterations to the building's fabric. The development is unlikely to increase flood risk, but within the lifetime of the development, the development is likely to be flooded. The Flood Risk Assessment has acknowledged the sites position in context of the Flood Zone (2).

HDC Environmental Health: Comment

- Potential presence of asbestos containing materials in the parts of the building to form private dwellings
- Incompatible stacking with the bedroom to flat 2 located below the kitchen and living area to flat 4. This is contrary to the advice in Approved Document E.

HDC Economic Development: No Objection

Concerned about loss of commercial space which would be contrary to the Council's Economic Strategy. However, due to the location of this building and the commercial element of the building not being operational for the last few years, would not consider the move to residential to pose a threat to the vitality and viability of the local economy.

OUTSIDE AGENCIES

Ecology Consultant: Comment

Note from the Bat Emergence and Re-Entry Survey (Arbtech Consulting Limited, July 2026) that the two surveys undertaken in June 2026 on Building B1 (two-storey brick-built building) recorded no emergences by bats and no bat roosts were observed. In addition, we understand that there are no trees on site. Therefore, we agree that no further surveys for bats are required.

The mitigation measures identified in the Bat Emergence and Re-Entry Survey (Arbtech Consulting Limited, July 2026) and Preliminary Roost Assessment (Arbtech Consulting Limited, March 2026) should be secured by a condition of any consent and implemented in full. This is necessary to conserve and enhance protected and Priority species particularly those recorded in the locality, including bats.

If external lighting is required, support the recommendation that a Wildlife Friendly Lighting Strategy is implemented for this application (Bat Emergence and Re-Entry Survey (Arbtech Consulting Limited, July 2026) to avoid impacts from light disturbance. This should be secured by a condition of any consent and implemented in full.

Also support the proposed reasonable biodiversity enhancements for protected, Priority and threatened species, which have been recommended in the Bat Emergence and Re-Entry Survey (Arbtech Consulting Limited, July 2026) to secure net gains for biodiversity, as outlined under Paragraph 187d and 193d of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024). The reasonable biodiversity enhancement measures should be outlined within a separate Biodiversity Enhancement Layout and secured by a condition of any consent.

WSCC Highways: Comment

The site benefits from an existing access onto High Street and an existing access onto Sir Georges Place, an unclassified road subject to a speed restriction of 30 mph. An inspection of data supplied to WSCC by Sussex Police over a period the past five years reveals that have been no recorded collisions within the vicinity of the site. Therefore, there is no evidence to suggest that the existing accesses to the site are operating unsafely or that the proposal would exacerbate an existing safety concern.

No traffic flow information has been provided with the current application; however, Class E uses tend to generate greater material movements than residential. Therefore, the LHA does not anticipate that material movements associated with the site will exceed that of the potential of the existing use.

The applicant proposes four car parking spaces for this development. The WSCC Car Parking Demand Calculator indicates that a development of this size in this location would require at least seven car parking spaces. Therefore, any overspill parking would have to be accommodated on street.

There are comprehensive parking restrictions in place prohibiting vehicles from parking in places that would be a detriment to highway safety. The LHA does not anticipate that the proposed shortfall of three car parking spaces would result in a detrimental highway safety impact. However, the LPA may wish to consider the potential impacts on on-street parking from an amenity point of view.

From inspection of the plans, both existing parking areas are suitably sized for two car parking spaces. The Planning Statement states that secure, covered cycle parking provision will be provided to promote sustainable travel options.

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

NatureSpace: Comment

The proposed development is not considered to be relevant to the District Licensing Scheme in this case and consider there would be no likely impact on great crested newts or their habitats.

Southern Water: Comment

Details of the proposed means of foul/surface water drainage disposal have been submitted.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS:

Representations:

4 letters of objection received from 3 separate households, and these can be summarised as follows:

- Loss of shop
- Lack of parking
- On-street parking pressure

Parish Comments:

Steyning Parish Council: No Objection

Concerns due to a lack of parking facilities

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

Policy 12 of the HDPF recognises Steyning as a Secondary Centre, where the hierarchy of retail centres will be supported and enhanced through promotion and encouragement of activities in town and village centres so they continue to be the prime focus for community life in the District. This includes maintaining a diverse range and choice of suitable uses, including retail, leisure, entertainment, sports and recreation, arts, culture, business and commercial uses, as well as residential. Town and village centres should include a convenient, cohesive and concentrated primary area which contains a high proportion of retail (A1) uses where this has reasonable prospects for remaining viable.

Policy 13 of the HDPF continues that the Council will favour a change of use of retail to other commercial uses over change of use to residential in the first instance. Proposals for residential must demonstrate that the retail unit is no longer viable.

Steyping is defined as a “Small Towns and Larger Villages” under the settlement hierarchy of Policy 3 of the HDPF. These are settlements with a good range of services and facilities, strong community networks and local employment provision, together with reasonable rail and/or bus services. The settlements act as hubs for smaller villages to meet their daily needs, but also have some reliance on larger settlements/each other to meet some of their requirements.

The subject building comprises a former ground floor retail unit most recently serving as a bakery and known as “Model Bakery”. The marketing letter provided by HJ Burt outlines that the retail unit has been closed since April 2025 when the business operation was no longer viable. Specifically, much of the equipment had become outdated and non-compliant with modern health and safety standards, and there was little demand for a bakery of this size, type, and location. A period of marketing was undertaken from April 2025, where the letter outlines that the majority of inquiries were focused on residential redevelopment schemes. No enquiries were received from parties interested in retaining or exploring the existing commercial use of the property. The letter concludes that the property is situated at the end of the High Street, away from other commercial properties, and has little passing trade either by pedestrian or vehicles (due to the limited space to stop and park). The letter notes that there are currently unoccupied retail units for rent, with a premises that have been empty for years.

A supplementary email from the Agent outlines that the property possesses a number of inherent physical and operational constraints by its existing layout and configuration. The accommodation is fragmented, with a relatively small retail frontage and extensive bakery accommodation that has been specially configured for its former use. The internal arrangement does not readily lend itself to modern commercial requirements without substantial alteration. The property benefits from limited on-site parking and servicing space, restricting its attractiveness to a wider range of commercial occupiers. It is also outlined that the building is in a poor state of repair and decorative condition, where the walls, floors, and ceilings require comprehensive refurbishment, whilst the electrical installation and other building services would require replacement or significant upgrading. The cost of undertaking the necessary refurbishment and modernisation works, together with the removal of obsolete plant and machinery, would be substantial. When considered alongside the building’s physical limitations, these costs render the retention or conversion of the premises to an alternative commercial use economically unattractive and commercially unviable. The response continues that the property’s configuration and location are unlikely to appeal to alternative commercial users such as office, showroom or studio occupiers, as the fragmented floorplan, restricted parking provision, and servicing constraints, all detract from its attractiveness when compared with more modern commercial available in more suitable locations. The response concludes that when taken together, the marketing evidence and property’s inherent physical, operations, and economic constraints clearly demonstrate that there is no realistic prospect of the building being retained in, or successfully adapted to, an alternative commercial use. By contrast, the proposed residential conversion represents a viable and sustainable long-term use that will secure the future of the building, bring a vacant and deteriorating property back into beneficial use and contribute to the delivery of much-needed housing without adversely affecting the vitality or viability of Steyping town centre, particularly given the site’s position outside the designated retail frontage.

It is noted that a previous planning application under reference DC/07/1458 sought permission for *“Change of use of existing bakery, shop and 3-bed flat to 3 x 3-bed houses and addition of 1 x new 3-bed townhouse, all with private amenity space and secure parking for one car per dwelling. Demolition of existing rear kitchen extension”*. While this application pre-dates the current Local Planning, it is of note that the application was refused on the grounds of the scale, height, bulk and massing of the redevelopment representing overdevelopment of the site, which would be unduly prominent within the street scene, to the detriment of the visual amenities of the area. It was also considered that the scale, bulk and mass would detract from the residential amenities of adjacent occupiers in terms of loss of outlook and privacy, and would appear overbearing. The application was also refused on the grounds of unacceptable parking arrangements and sightlines, and lack of financial contributions for community facilities and transport infrastructure. No concerns were however raised with respect to the loss of the commercial unit.

A subsequent planning application under reference DC/08/1582 was recommended for approval by Planning Committee for the *“Demolition of existing bakery, shop and 3-bedroom flat and erection of 2 x*

2-bed town houses and 1 x 3-bed town house with gardens and private parking (Full Planning)". However, this was subsequently withdrawn following the failure to complete a s106 Legal Agreement for financial contributions. Similar to the previous application, no concerns were raised regarding the loss of the commercial use.

The application site is located at a distance from Steyning Village Centre, occupying a plot that is predominantly surrounded by residential development. The site is distanced from the main shopping area and other commercial uses of the village centre, where the loss of the retail/commercial unit would not be considered to erode the offer within or vitality of the village centre. While the loss of the commercial unit would be unfortunate, sufficient information has been provided to demonstrate that the repair and refurbishment of the building to modern office and commercial premises would be significantly costly, where the floor plan layout and lacking of specific parking provision would likely make the unit unattractive and unviable.

The proposed change of use would enable the re-use and continued use of a building within a sustainable location. The proposal would provide 4no. residential properties within the built-up area of Steyning, contributed to the housing need of the Parish and District. The proposal would result in benefits in this regard, where this is of weight in the assessment of the application.

While the loss of the retail/commercial unit would be unfortunate, it is not considered that the proposal would result in unacceptable harm to the vitality and offer within the village, particularly given its distance from the village centre and shopping area. The proposal would contribute to the identified housing need within the District, and would be located within a sustainable location. For these reasons, the proposed development is considered acceptable in principle, subject to all other material considerations.

Design and Appearance:

Policies 25, 32, and 33 of the HDPF promote development that protects, conserves and enhances the landscape and townscape character from inappropriate development. Proposals should take into account 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.

Policy SNDP3 of the Steyning Neighbourhood Plan states that development proposals which demonstrate how they will positively contribute towards Steyning's character will be supported. Development should respond positively and sensitively to the scale, mass, height, building materials, and form of neighbouring properties.

The proposed development seeks to retain the existing building, with the installation of pitched and flat roof dormers within the roof of the building to provide second floor accommodation. It is also proposed to rebuild an extension to the west elevation, incorporating a crown-pitched roof.

The application site is located in a prominent corner plot along the main thoroughfare of High Street, Steyning. The property benefits from flat roof dormers within the roofscape, with the wider surroundings including a mix of building ages and styles, finished in a mixed palette of materials. The proposed development would retain the overall character of the building, and while a number of dormers are proposed, it is considered that these are of a design, form, size, and number that would sit proportionately and appropriately within the context of the building and roofscape. The proposed rebuild of the extension to the west elevation would be of a design and form that would reflect the build characteristics of the existing building, and would be of a scale that would sit comfortably within the confines of the site. In addition, the replacement fenestration is considered to better reflect the character and visual quality of the street scene and designated Conservation Area, and would improve the overall amenity of the building.

The proposed development is considered to be of a scale, form, design and appearance that would reflect the build characteristics of the existing dwelling and visual amenities of the street scene, in accordance with the above policies.

Heritage:

Policy 34 of the HDPF states that applications for development affecting heritage assets will be required to reinforce the special character of the District's historic environment through appropriate siting, scale,

form and design, including the use of traditional materials and techniques; make a positive contribution to the character and distinctiveness of the area, ensuring that development in Conservation Areas is consistent with the special character of those areas; and preserve and ensure the clear legibility of, locally distinctive vernacular building forms and their settings, features, fabric and materials.

The proposed development is considered to utilise a design and form that would reflect the build characteristics of the designated Conservation Area, with the proposed materials and detailing considered to make a positive contribution to the overall visual amenity and character of the street scene. For these reasons, the proposed development is considered to accord with the above policy.

Residential Amenity:

Policy 32 of the HDPF states that development will be expected to provide an attractive, functional, accessible, safe, and adaptable environment that contribute a sense of place both in the buildings and spaces themselves. Policy 33 continues that development shall be required to ensure that it is designed to avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of occupiers/users of nearby property and land.

Policy SDNP3 of the Steyning Neighbourhood Plan states that development proposals should respect the amenity of properties in their immediate locality.

The proposal seeks to convert an existing building located to the south and east of residential properties. The rebuild of an existing extension is proposed to the west elevation, with the incorporation of dormers within to each of the roof slopes. While the proposal would introduce a greater level of overlooking, particularly to the north and east, it is recognised that upper floor accommodation is already present within the building where a degree of mutual overlooking is already present. It is not considered that the proposal would result in any further harm through overlooking and loss of privacy above the existing situation, where the proposed residential use is considered to better reflect the character of the immediate surroundings. As such, the proposal is considered to accord with the above policies.

Highways Impacts:

Policies 40 and 41 of the HDPF promote development that provides safe and adequate access, suitable for all users.

The proposed development would provide 4no. parking spaces, with 2no. spaces provided to the north and south respectively. Cycle parking would be provided within the curtilage of the building.

The West Sussex Guidance on Parking at New Developments indicates that each 2-bed unit would require 1.7 spaces, with the demand overall generating a demand for 5.6 spaces. The proposal would therefore result in an undersupply of 1no. parking space. It is however recognised that the site is located in close proximity to public car parks and on-street parking, where the undersupply of 1no. space would not be considered to result in harm to the function, safety or amenity of the highway network.

The proposed parking arrangement would be reflective of similar arrangements within the locality, where it is considered that vehicles could access and egress from the site without severe impact on the highway network.

The site is located within a sustainable location, and within walking distance to a number of amenities, facilities and services. The site would also be served by public transport modes to other nearby settlements.

For these reasons, the proposed development is considered to be served by suitable access arrangements, in accordance with the above policies.

Ecology:

Policy 31 of the HDPF states that development will be supported where it demonstrates that it maintains or enhances the existing network of green infrastructure. Development proposals will be required to contribute to the enhancement of existing biodiversity and should create and manage new habitats where appropriate.

Circular 06/2005 identifies that the presence of protected species is a material consideration when considering a development proposal that, if carried out, would be likely to result in harm to the species or its habitat. Therefore, it is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed application, is established before planning permission is

granted. Information on biodiversity impacts and opportunities should inform all stages of development, and an ecological survey is usually necessary where the type and location of development are such that the impact on biodiversity may be significant and existing information is lacking or inadequate.

The Applicant has submitted a Preliminary Roost Assessment by Arbtech dated 18.03.226 and Bat Emergence and Re-Entry Survey by Arbtech dated 06.07.2026. The Preliminary Roost Assessment concluded that the proposed development included impacts to the roof, where such works could result in destruction of bat roosts and could cause disturbance, death or injury to bats. The Bat Emergence Survey observed no emergences during any visit, and no roosts were observed during these visits. It is concluded that there is sufficiently low risk of bat roosts being present on site and conversion works can proceed without any further survey or licence requirements. The Report confirms that a bat licence is not required for the works, and recommends that low impact lighting should be used where required, with the creation of additional habitat for bats recommended through the installation of bat boxes.

Following consultation with the Council's Ecologist, it is agreed that no further surveys for bats are required.

The mitigation measures identified are considered satisfactory, and the biodiversity enhancement measures as suggested are considered reasonable. It is recommended that these are secured by condition.

Subject to the inclusion of conditions to secure mitigation and enhancement measures, it is considered that the proposal would result in no adverse harm to protected and priority species, in accordance with the above policies.

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.

Climate Change:

Policies 35, 36 and 37 require that development mitigates to the impacts of climate change through measures including improved energy efficiency, reducing flood risk, reducing water consumption, improving biodiversity and promoting sustainable transport modes. These policies reflect the requirements of Chapter 14 of the NPPF that local plans and decisions seek to reduce the impact of development on climate change.

Should the proposed development be approved, the following measures to build resilience to climate change and reduce carbon emissions would be secured by condition:

- Water consumption limited to 110litres per person per day
- Requirement to provide full fibre broadband site connectivity
- Dedicated refuse and recycling storage capacity
- Cycle parking facilities
- Improved pedestrian and cycle links
- Electric vehicle charging points

Subject to these conditions, the application will suitably reduce the impact of the development on climate change in accordance with local and national policy.

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 (on unregistered sites) 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 development seeks to convert a former retail unit located within the built-up area of Steyning. While the loss of the commercial unit would be unfortunate, it is recognised that the existing layout and state of the building would require significant investment, with limited prospect for alternative commercial uses. The proposal would contribute to the identified housing need within the District, and would be located within a sustainable location in close proximity to amenities, facilities, and services. The proposal is therefore considered to result in benefits, with the principle of conversion to residential considered acceptable.

The proposed external alterations, including the addition of dormers, is considered to be of a scale, form and design that would appropriately reflect the character and built characteristics of the locality, and would preserve the special qualities of the designated Conservation Area. In addition, the proposal would result in no further harm to the amenities of residential properties through overlooking, loss of light or loss of privacy.

While the proposal would result in a small shortfall of off-street parking spaces, alternative public and unrestricted parking arrangements are available. Although recognised that concerns have been raised regarding the impact on existing parking pressures, the small shortfall is not considered to result in significant harm to parking access within the locality. Furthermore, it is acknowledged that the site is located within a sustainable location, within walking distance of local amenities, facilities and services. The site would also be located within close proximity of public transport nodes, with good access to other settlements. Alternative provisions would therefore be available, with less reliance on private vehicles.

Overall, the proposal is considered to be acceptable, in accordance with local and national planning policies.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

Horsham District Council has adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule which took effect on 1st October 2017.

It is considered that this development constitutes CIL liable development.

Use Description	Proposed	Existing	Net Gain
District Wide Zone 1	354	312	42
Total Gain			
Total Demolition			

Please note that the above figures will be reviewed by the CIL Team prior to issuing a CIL Liability Notice and may therefore change.

Exemptions and/or reliefs may be applied for up until the commencement of a chargeable development.

In the event that planning permission is granted, a CIL Liability Notice will be issued thereafter. CIL payments are payable on commencement of development.

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-Commencement (Slab) Condition:** Prior to relevant work beginning, the following details shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority: -

- Specifications of external materials and surface finishes.
- Specifications of all new and replacement windows including method of opening, method of glazing and materials.

The relevant works must not be executed other than in complete accordance with these approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the significance of the designated heritage asset and the character, appearance and integrity of the building is not prejudiced and to comply with Policy 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 4 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy for Protected and Priority species has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The content of the Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy shall include the following:

- (a) Purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed enhancement measures;

- (b) Detailed designs to achieve stated objectives;
- (c) Locations of proposed enhancement measures by appropriate maps and plans;
- (d) Persons responsible for implementing the enhancement measures;
- (e) Details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance (where relevant).

The works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and shall be retained in that manner thereafter.

Reason: As these matters are fundamental to safeguard the ecology and biodiversity of the area in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), and to enhance Protected and Priority Species/habitats and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority Habitats & Species).

- 5 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until the parking, turning and access facilities necessary to serve that dwelling have been implemented in accordance with the approved details as shown on plan reference 04 and shall be thereafter retained as such.

Reason: To ensure adequate parking, turning and access facilities are available to serve the development in accordance with Policy 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 6 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until the cycle parking facilities serving it have been constructed and made available for use in accordance with plan reference 04. The cycle parking facilities shall thereafter be retained as such for their designated use.

Reason: To ensure that there is adequate provision for the parking of cycles in accordance with Policy 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 7 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until provision for the storage of refuse and recycling has been provided within the land to the north and/or east of the building. The facilities shall thereafter be retained for use at all times.

Reason: To ensure the adequate provision of refuse and recycling facilities in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 8 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** Prior to the first occupation of each dwelling, the necessary in-building physical infrastructure and external site-wide infrastructure to enable superfast broadband speeds of 30 megabits per second through full fibre broadband connection shall be provided to the premises.

Reason: To ensure a sustainable development that meets the needs of future occupiers in accordance with Policy 37 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 9 **Regulatory Condition:** The dwelling(s) hereby permitted shall meet the optional requirement of building regulation G2 to limit the water usage of each dwelling to no more than 110 litres per person per day. The subsequently installed water limiting measures shall thereafter be retained.

Reason: To limit water use in order to improve the sustainability of the development in accordance with Policy 37 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), and to avoid an adverse impact on the Arun Valley SACSPA and Ramsar sites in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), Paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), and to allow the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under the

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species).

- 10 **Regulatory Condition:** The development hereby permitted shall be undertaken in strict accordance with the ecological mitigation and enhancement measures set out in Preliminary Roost Assessment by Arbtech dated 18.03.226 and Bat Emergence and Re-Entry Survey by Arbtech dated 06.07.2026.

Reason: As these matters are fundamental to safeguard the ecology and biodiversity of the area in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), and to enhance Protected and Priority Species/habitats and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species).

- 11 **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).

Biodiversity Net Gain Condition

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.

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/26/0953

(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
Plans	Existing Plans	01	11.06.2026
Plans	Existing Plan and Section	02	11.06.2026
Elevation plan	Existing Elevations	03	11.06.2026
Plans	Proposed Plans	04	11.06.2026
Plans	Proposed Plan and Section	05	11.05.2026
Elevation plan	Proposed Elevations	06	11.06.2026
Supporting Docs	Preliminary Roost Assessment by Arbtech dated 18.03.226	NONE	11.06.2026
Supporting Docs	Bat Emergence and Re-Entry Survey by Arbtech dated 06.07.2026	NONE	11.06.2026

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Tamara Dale Date: 14.08.2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial Guy Everest Date: 17.08.2026