Horsham District Council

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:
DC/24/1733
The Laurels, 1 The Crescent, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 1NA

DESCRIPTION:
Removal of hedges on the existing brick wall to the front of the property and replace with fence topper trellis.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/06/2707	Loft conversion with front and rear dormers, single-storey side/rear extension to replace existing and replacement conservatory	Application Permitted on 06.12.2006

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES
The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):

Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles

Horsham Blueprint Business Neighbourhood Forum:
Policy HB3: Character of Development
Policy HB4: Design of Development

Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19):
Policy 19: Development Quality
Policy 20: Development Principles

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 Aboricultural: The loss of a soft landscape boundary screen to the property has a negative impact on the character of the streetscene. If viable/appropriate, a boundary demarcation that included tree/hedge planting would be preferable to the proposed form of enclosure.

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.

WSCC Highways: 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.

Parish Comments:
Raised no objection to the application.

Representations:
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.

Character and Appearance

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

Policy HB3 of the Horsham Blueprint Business Neighbourhood Plan states that development is expected to preserve and enhance the Character Area in which it is located. The design of new development should take account of local context and reflect the character and vernacular of the area, using architectural variety in form and materials, in order to avoid building design that is inappropriate to the Plan area. Policy HB4 continues that development is expected to demonstrate a high quality of design, which responds and integrate well with its surroundings.

The existing frontage comprises a low-level brick wall with an evergreen hedge. The hedge was originally shrubs, based on photography dating from 2009, but has since been allowed to grow and become more substantial. The neighbouring frontages to the north, dominated by the side boundaries of gardens to properties which front Guildford Road, are marked by timber fencing with vegetation above, as it's the immediate northern neighbour fronting The Crescent. To the south frontages are

generally low-level walls and fences, with intermittent planting and openings for vehicular / pedestrian access.

It is considered that in this context, and taking into account the nature of front boundaries to the north, the presence of a low-level brick wall with timber slatted fence above (to a height of approximately 1.6m) would not appear out of keeping or visually harmful.

It is noted that concerns have been raised as to the visual impact that removal of the hedge would cause. While this is acknowledged the existing planting is not formally protected and the Council has no controls to prevent its removal. It is therefore considered that resisting removal of the hedgerow would not be reasonable. In addition, given the variable nature of planting along The Crescent it is not considered necessary to require replacement planting, which in any case would need to be inside of the site boundaries and not readily seen above the proposed fencing.

It is therefore considered that the visual impact of the proposal is acceptable and would accord with the above policies.

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.

It is considered that the siting and scale of the proposed boundary treatment would not result in any unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity.

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.

Biodiversity Net Gain

In accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024, all householder applications are current exempt from the statutory requirement to demonstrate a 10% net gain in biodiversity.

Other Considerations

The LHA has not raised any objections to the proposed boundary treatment in respect of highway safety, and there are no reasons to take a different view.

It is noted that the applicant considers the proposal would improve visibility in comparison to the existing arrangement. This is acknowledged, but in the absence of any evidence to suggest the existing arrangement is not operating safely this matter is not considered fundamental to the determination of the application.

Conclusion

The proposal is considered to comply with relevant local and national planning policies and 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 **Regulatory Condition**: The materials to be used in the development hereby permitted shall strictly accord with those indicated on the approved plans and application form.

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/24/1733

(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
Block plan		NONE	20.11.2024
Elevation plan	Existing and Proposed	NONE	20.11.2024
Location plan		NONE	07.11.2024
Supporting Docs	Application Form	NONE	07.11.2024

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Meg Bayliss Date: 13/01/2025

Authorising Officer sign/initial Guy Everest Date: 15.01.2025