Horsham District Council

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:
DC/25/0481
Architectural Plants Limited, Stane Street, North Heath, West Sussex, RH20 1DJ

DESCRIPTION:
Variation of conditions 1, 6, 8 and 11 on approved application DC/19/0438 (Mixed use of existing horticultural nursery / education centre to allow for weddings and other events) To increase the number of weddings and other events permitted.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/19/0438	Mixed use of existing horticultural nursery / education centre to allow for weddings and other events	Application 23.12.2019	Permitted
DC/24/1000	Erection of a ground mounted Solar PV System.	Application 29.11.2024	Permitted on

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The application site is a mixed use horticultural nursery/ education centre with permission to hold ancillary events, situated in a rural location on the western side of the A29 Stane Street. To the south of the site is the Brinsbury College Campus. The site is accessed via a driveway from the A29 with grassland to the north of the drive. To the south of the drive is a parking area and polytunnels.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

This application seeks to amend the planning permission approved under DC/19/0438 to allow an increase in the number of weddings and other events allowed at the site per year to 30 per year, with a maximum of 6 per month. The site is currently restricted by condition 6 to no more than 10 weddings or events per year, and no more than 2 a month. Alongside amending condition 6, the application seeks to amend condition 8 to reference a revised Event Management Plan and condition 11 to expand the areas where the ceremonies can take place, by submitting a revised site layout plan to be referenced in the amended condition. The existing conditions are listed below.

6 **Regulatory Condition**: No more than 10 weddings or other events not associated plant and tree production or Horticultural Education shall take place per calendar year, with no more than 2 weddings or other events not associated plant and tree production or Horticultural Education in any single month.

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

8 **Regulatory Condition**: The wedding and event use hereby permitted shall take place in strict accordance with the details set out in the 'Event Management Plan' submitted 29 April 2019.

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

11 **Regulatory Condition**: The wedding and event use hereby permitted shall be implemented in accordance with the approved site layout plan (ref: APP-001 Rev C) and shall not include any external marquees.

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

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 10 - Rural Economic Development
Policy 24 - Strategic Policy: Environmental Protection
Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Policy 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection
Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles
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
Policy 43 - Community Facilities, Leisure and Recreation

Pulborough Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2031:
Policy 1: A spatial plan for the Parish

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 11: Environmental Protection
Strategic Policy 13: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Strategic Policy 14: Countryside Protection
Strategic Policy 15: Settlement Coalescence
Strategic Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 18: Local Green Space
Strategic Policy 19: Development Quality
Strategic Policy 20: Development Principles
Strategic Policy 23: Infrastructure Provision
Strategic Policy 24: Sustainable Transport
Policy 25: Parking
Strategic Policy 27: Inclusive Communities, Health and Wellbeing
Policy 28: Community Facilities, Leisure and Recreation
Strategic Policy 30: Enhancing Existing Employment
Policy 31: Rural Economic Development
Strategic Policy 34: Tourism Facilities and Visitor Accommodation

Supplementary Planning Guidance:
Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing SPD (2017)
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule (2017)
Brinsbury Centre for Rural Excellence SPD (2009)

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 Business Development: No Objection

We have no objection to the business seeking to extend the area within their property and increase the number of weddings allowed per year (up to 30) with no more than 6 per month. This will allow increased demand and generate extra income to ensure the business flourishes.

Our local businesses need support (Economic Prospectus Guiding Principle – Nurturing Business Development) to become more productive and resilient to facilitate long-term economic growth. Supporting change that allows an increase event days will increase customer numbers / income and support this and other local businesses thereby bringing benefits to the local economy.

HDC Environmental Health: Comment

'We understand that the premises has been used for mixed use purposes since 2019 and, during this time, the Environmental Health and Licencing Team have not received any formal complaints in relation to noise disturbance from the premises. Our concern however is that should the premises obtain permission for discharge of conditions 6, 7 & 8 then these would allow very wide range of activities/uses there is the potential for a more intrusive/noisy use to be implemented at some stage during the lifetime of the development. Given the above we remain concerned about the granting the removal of conditions 6, 7 & 8 in the location, however should the LPA be minded to grant this application we would recommend the below conditions also remain in place.

And would recommend the following;
1.There should be an effective management system in place to control noise and nuisance ensuring that neighbouring residents are not disturbed. This should include a noise limiter set at 90dB.
2. The applicant should submit details to the Planning Authority of the written management system detailing mitigation measures to be implemented with a time of 23.30hrs for amplified music to cease.
3. Any live and amplified music activities from within the premises should not be audible inside noise sensitive premises. This means that basically if the windows of the residential property are open any noise from amplified music, etc. must not be audible.
5. Numbers of events should be restricted to ten per calendar year with no more than 2 events in any month'

OUTSIDE AGENCIES
Archaeology Consultant: No Objection

Although the site is within an ANA the proposals do not impact upon buried archaeological remains and so I have no archaeological concerns in this case

Natural England (standing advice): No Objection

WSCC Highways: No Objection

The variation is proposed to allow increase from 10 weddings per year to 30 weddings per year (no more than 6/month). It is proposed to expand the areas where ceremonies can take place on site.

No changes to existing access to A29 which is of sufficient geometry, width and visibility. Improvements have been made within the site to improve ease of access with the main gate being moved back 15 metre creating space between gate and A29. A Parking Steward supervises vehicle movements during events and Event Management Plan adhered to.

No changes proposed to car parking areas – disabled parking is allocated and nature of events mean car sharing likely. On basis of 2 people car sharing and largest event being 150 people, a peak demand for 75 x car parking spaces results. In reality it is likely some cars will contain more people (up to 4) and potentially mini-buses/taxis.

The parking areas demonstrated are sufficient in size for this purpose and the increase in events/numbers is not anticipated to result in a 'severe' impact on operational capacity or highway safety of nearby road network.

No highways objection to the variation of conditions application.

WSCC Fire and Rescue: Comment

Having viewed the plans for the planning application no. DC/25/0481 for variation of conditions 1, 6, 8 and 11 on approved application DC/19/0438 (Mixed use of existing horticultural nursery / education centre to allow for weddings and other events) To increase the number of weddings and other events permitted: the nearest fire hydrant for the supply of water for firefighting is 410-metres away, 320-metres further than the 90-metre distance required for a commercial site. If an alternative water supply for firefighting is to be considered it will need to conform with the details identified in Approved Document-B (AD-B) Volume 2: B5 section 15 and agreed with West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service.

Unfortunately, West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service were not consulted on Planning application DC/19/0438 when submitted, when a fire hydrant requirement condition would have been raised to ensure the site was protected in the event of a fire by the provision of a fire hydrant or an alternative supply of water for firefighting. With no supply of water for firefighting available within the required distance for a commercial premises, information the owner may not be aware of, and information that could affect the insurance premiums and cover for the properties if water for firefighting is not provided.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS:
Representations:
None received

Parish Comments:
Pulborough Parish Council: Support

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 principle of the development was established under DC/19/0438.

This application seeks to increase the number of events allowed per year and per month. The suggested amended wording for condition 6 is as follows:

No more than 30 weddings or other events not associated with plant and tree production or Horticultural Education shall take place per calendar year with no more than 6 weddings or other events not associated with plant and tree production or Horticultural Education in any single month

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

In addition, it is proposed to expand the areas where the ceremonies can take place. On Planning Permission Reference DC/19/0438 this was restricted through the use of Planning Conditions No. 1 and 11 which conditioned the layout of the site, showing the area that could be used for ceremonies. A revised plan has been submitted.

The Event Management Plan has been updated, which is based on the experience of the applicant in running the events since 2019. It is proposed that the latest version of the Events Management Plan (revised August 2019) be used and substituted for the wording within Planning Condition 8 which refers to an earlier copy of the Event Management Plan that was prepared on 29th April 2019.

Policy 10 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) states that sustainable rural economic development and enterprise within the district will be encouraged in order to generate local employment opportunities and economic, social and environmental benefits for local communities. In the countryside, development which maintains the quality and character of the area, whilst sustaining its varied and productive social and economic activity will be supported in principle. Any development should be appropriate to the countryside location and must: contribute to the diverse and sustainable farming enterprises within the district or, in the case of other countryside-based enterprises and activities, contribute to the wider rural economy and/or promote recreation in, and the enjoyment or, the countryside; and either, be contained wherever possible within suitably located buildings which are appropriate for conversion.

The amendments would allow the operation to continue to contribute to the diversification of the existing enterprise, while contributing to the rural economy and generating economic and social benefits for the local community. The proposal would continue to be contained within a suitably located existing commercial building and is considered to support productive social and economic activity in the countryside, including assisting in the site meeting the aims of the Brinsbury Centre for Rural Excellence SPD, as explained within the applicant's submission.

Amenity Impact:

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.

This application seeks to increase the number of events allowed per year and per month. It was acknowledged in the consideration of DC/19/0438 that the site for a wedding venue would likely lead to an increase in noise and activity outside of regular working hours.

As part of the original 2019 application process, and following consultation with the Council's Environmental Health Team, no objection was raised to the proposal. The Environmental Health team have under this current application identified amenity concerns unless consent is conditioned in a similar manner to previous, including the original number of events.

The applicant has submitted a revised Event Management Plan which sets out a series of measures to minimise the potential for disruption to neighbouring properties. It is noted that the requirement to contact neighbours before every event has been removed however complaints will still be recorded and monitored and made available on request. With more events it is considered that it would be

unmanageable to notify them every time. It is noted that no neighbour objections have been received to this proposal.

The revised site overview plan shows a revised location within the site for the ceremony area. This has moved to a polytunnel slightly further west but is still in the same general location within the site. The alcohol licence area appears to have increased slightly but this is negligible. A second area for ceremonies is now shown near to the lake on the northwestern part of the site. Whilst this is nearer the caravan park to the northeast of the site, given each ceremony would be of short duration no harm is identified.

It is considered that with the updated Event Management Plan, coupled with the sizeable distances between the site and neighbouring properties, and the conditions recommended to control the number of events to maximum 6 a month and 30 a year, and hours for music etc. would be sufficient to restrict potential impact upon neighbouring properties.

Highways Impacts:

Policies 40 and 41 of the HDPF promote development that provides safe and adequate access, suitable for all users. The application does not propose any alterations to the access arrangements to and from the site, which benefits from a sizeable area for vehicular parking. The Highway Authority has reviewed these details and advised that no highway related concerns are expected as a result of the proposal. There are considered to be no reasons to take a different view and the proposal would not have a severe impact on the highway network.

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.

The two previous applications were both refused partly due to not being able 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 (24.7litres per day), 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.

Conclusions:

The proposal to amend the conditions is considered acceptable and would continue to contribute to sustainable rural social and economic growth within the District. Subject to appropriately worded conditions, it is not considered that the amendments would result in harm to the amenities or sensitivities of neighbouring properties or users of land. The proposal is considered to continue to provide an appropriate level of parking and would not result in harm to the function or safety of the public highway network. The amendments are therefore considered to accord with all relevant local and national planning policies.

Recommendation: Application Permitted

Conditions:

1 Plans list

2 N/A

3 **Regulatory Condition**: The site shall only be used as a plant and tree production nursery, with associated sales; and for the furtherance of Horticultural Education in association with Brinsbury Campus; and as a wedding and event venue and for no other purpose unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development accords with the aims of the Brinsbury Centre of Rural Excellence Supplementary Planning Document.

4 **Regulatory Condition**: The car parking area hereby permitted shall provide space for no more than 100 vehicles and lorry parking and turning in association with the development hereby permitted unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the level of car parking provided is sufficient to serve the development hereby approved in accordance with policies 40 and 41 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

5 **Regulatory Condition**: No more than 5% of the built area of the nursery shall be used for the sale of horticultural goods other than trees and plants.

Reason: To ensure that the development accords with the aims of the Brinsbury Centre of Rural Excellence Supplementary Planning Document.

6 **Regulatory Condition**: No more than 30 weddings or other events not associated with plant and tree production or Horticultural Education shall take place per calendar year, with no more than 6 weddings or other events not associated plant and tree production or Horticultural Education in any single month.

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

7 **Regulatory Condition**: No amplified music or public address system shall be played within the building except between the hours of 10:00 and 23:30 and shall at no times be played outside of the building.

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

8 **Regulatory Condition**: The wedding and event use hereby permitted shall take place in strict accordance with the details set out in the 'Event Management Plan' submitted August 2024.

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

9 **Regulatory Condition**: No outdoor fireworks or pyrotechnics shall be used anywhere on the site in connection with the hereby permitted wedding and event use.

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

10 **Regulatory Condition**: No external lighting or floodlighting, other than within the enclosed courtyard area, shall be installed without 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).

11 **Regulatory Condition**: The wedding and event use hereby permitted shall be implemented in accordance with the approved site layout plan (Architectural Plants Site Overview dated 05.09.2024 (received 26/03/2025)) and shall not include any external marquees.

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

Note to Applicant:
The applicant is advised to review the comments from the WSCC Fire and Rescue Service regarding the recommended provision of fire fighting apparatus.

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/25/0481
(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
Supporting Statement	Architectural Plants - Event Attendees	NONE	26.03.2025
Supporting Statement	Event Management Plan August 2024	NONE	26.03.2025
Site plan	Architectural plants - site overview	NONE	26.03.2025
Supporting Statement	Cover letter	NONE	26.03.2025

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Kate Turner Date: 20/11/25

Authorising Officer sign/initial Adrian Smith Date: 20/11/2025