Horsham District Council

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:
DC/25/0066
South Lodge Hotel, Brighton Road, Lower Beeding, West Sussex, RH13 6PS

DESCRIPTION:
Erection of store for vineyard vehicles and associated materials.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:
None

SITE AND SURROUNDS
South Lodge Hotel is a large site located in Crabtree, Lower Beeding outside of any built-up area. The red line boundary of the application site comprises the proposed location of the proposed store building and its associated private access road connecting the site to A281. The proposed store building sits within the large site of South Lodge Hotel, where parts of the site, including the main hotel building, sites within the Crabtree Conservation Area. The location of the proposed store building would be located outside of the designated Conservation Area, of proximity to the existing services facility of the South Lodge Spa erected under approved application DC/17/0483.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
The application seeks planning permission for the erection of a store / garage building for vehicles and machinery associated with the operations of South Lodge Vineyard, as well as associated materials.

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 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 34 - Cultural and Heritage Assets
Policy 35 - Strategic Policy: Climate Change
Policy 36 - Strategic Policy: Appropriate Energy Use
Policy 37 - Sustainable Construction
Policy 41 - Parking

Neighbourhood Plan:
Lower Beeding Parish have produced a neighbourhood plan which have been subject to successful Examination but cannot proceed to Referendum due to legal requirements in relation to Water Neutrality and the Habitat Regulations.

Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19):
Strategic Policy 1: Sustainable Development
Strategic Policy 2: Development Hierarchy
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 13: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Strategic Policy 14: Countryside Protection
Strategic Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 18: Local Green Space
Strategic Policy 19: Development Quality
Strategic Policy 20: Development Principles
Policy 21: Heritage Assets and Managing Change within the Historic Environment
Policy 25: Parking
Policy 31: Rural Economic Development

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 Arboricultural officer: No Objection
[In Full] "The development proposals at the site appear to be sited at an appropriate distance from the mature tree belt to the south of the area where the new vehicle store is proposed. From the site visit, it was apparent that some rhododendrons and other shrubs in the area will need to be removed to enable the new building to be erected, however, this action will not have any lasting landscape harm, and no Arboricultural concerns are raised with the development proposals at the site."

HDC Conservation: Objection No Objection Comment Support
[In Full] The proposed storage building will not impact the conservation area or the setting of the non-designated heritage asset.

NatureSpace Partnership: Comment
[Summary] It is considered that the proposed development would present a low risk to great crested newts and/or their habitats. However, as the development is within the red Impact Risk Zone, as modelled by district licence mapping, an informative is recommended. A Licence can also be obtained, which provides full legal cover for any impacts to great crested newts and therefore removes the risk of having to stop works if great crested newts are found on site. More details on the District Licensing Scheme operated by the Council can be found at www.naturespaceuk.com.

The following recommendations are also provided to further reduce the likelihood of impacts on this species:

- Any vegetation in the construction area will be kept closely mown during the course of the construction work.
- Any trenches left overnight should be covered or provided with ramps to prevent GCN from becoming trapped.
- Any building materials such as bricks, stone etc. should be stored on pallets to discourage GCN from using them as shelter.
- Any demolition materials should be stored in skips or similar containers rather than in piles on ground.

If at any point during construction works any great crested newts are identified, then the following instructions must be strictly adhered to:

- Stop all works immediately and leave the area
- Inform an ecologist immediately who will provide further guidance / instructions
- Do not try to handle or rescue a great crested newt
- Do not resume construction works until advised it is safe to do so by an ecologist

It should be noted that if an individual great crested newt is found at any point during the works, a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) or District Licence (DL) may be required to permit works that would potentially cause disturbance and otherwise commit an offence under the relevant legislation.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS:

Representations:
One letter of representation has been received, neither objecting to or supporting this proposal.

Parish Comments:
Lower Beeding Parish Council: Comment
The Lower Beeding Parish Council neither object or support this proposal, and expressed that great crested newts should be taken into consideration.

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 site is located outside of the defined built-up area boundary and is therefore considered to be within a countryside location. As such, the countryside protection policies within the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) are applicable in the case of this application.

Policy 26 of the HDPF seeks to protect the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside against inappropriate development. Proposals must also be of a scale appropriate to its countryside character location. Development will be considered acceptable where it does not lead, either individually or cumulatively, to a significant increase in the overall level of activity in the countryside, and protects, and/or conserves, and/or enhances, the key features and characteristics of the landscape character area in which it is located.

This application is for the erection of a storage / garage building for vehicles and machinery associated with the operations of South Lodge Vineyard, as well as associated materials at South Lodge Hotel,

Brighton Road, Lower Beeding. Given the establish use on the site, no objection is raised with regards to the principle of the development.

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 and attractive, functional and accessible environment that complements the locally distinctive character of the district. Buildings should contribute to a sense of place, and should be of a scale, massing, and appearance that is of a high standard or design and layout which relates sympathetically to the landscape and built surroundings.

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

The application site is located outside of any built-up area, and is therefore located in the countryside. The proposed store building would be 11 metres wide with a depth of 6 metres, and its maximum height would be 3.5 metres. The proposed building would be situated in the centre of the large site of South Lodge Hotel, within an existing cluster of hotel buildings and associated facilities. It would be located adjacent to the existing service facility for South Lodge Spa, consisting of a large plant room and LPG storage tanks, erected under approved application DC/17/0483.

The proposed location of the building would be situated outside of the Crabtree Conservation Area. It would be adjacent to the existing servicing facility of South Lodge Spa, and trees and established vegetation would be retained which would provide a layer of screening from the open fields. Therefore, the proposed store / garage building would not appear prominent in the open countryside. The proposed location of the building, being within an existing built environment, is considered of a scale appropriate to its countryside location.

Oak cladding matching the appearance of the adjacent spa building would be used for the north and east elevations of the building, with light grey powder coated steel cladding for the south and west elevations. The roof would consist of a light grey single ply membrane with solar panels, and the proposed roller shutter doors would be light grey in colour.

The proposal is considered to be of a design, form, siting and scale which is appropriate to the character and appearance of the surrounding landscape and built environment, and which would not harm the character of the wider area. Additionally, as a proposed facility for an existing activity on site, the South Lodge Vineyard, the proposal would not result in an intensification of activity in the countryside. The visual impact of the proposal is therefore considered acceptable and would accord with the above policies.

Trees and Landscaping:

Email correspondence on 17 March 2025 confirms that trees to the immediate west of the proposed building would be retained, and an above ground slab would be used to minimise impacts to the root protection areas of existing trees to the west.

Amenity Impacts:

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.

The proposed store building would be adjacent to the service facility of South Lodge Spa, and would be surrounded by land owned by South Lodge Hotel. The retainment of trees to the west of the proposed building site would also provide a layer of screening from the open fields,
It is considered that the proposal would not result in an unacceptable harm to amenity of neighbouring users.

Heritage Impacts:

Policy 34 of the HDPF seeks to sustain and enhance historic environments through positive management of development affecting heritage assets, and development in conservation areas should be consistent with the special character of those areas.

The proposed location of the store / garage building would be sited outside of the designated Conservation Area, and it is not considered to impact the setting of non-designated heritage assets or the Conservation Area.

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.

There is no clear or compelling evidence to suggest the nature and scale of the proposed development would result in a more intensive use of the site necessitating an increased consumption of water that would result in a significant impact on the Arun Vally 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 193 and the Council's obligations under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Environmental Impacts:

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.

Measures to build resilience to climate change are proposed. Solar panels are proposed to be installed on the roof of the proposed store / garage building with battery facilities installed inside the building to increase energy self-sufficiency. According to the submitted water neutrality statement, water would also be collected from the roof into water butts for the purposes of cleaning vehicles. Mains water would also not be connected to the building.

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.

The applicant has submitted a Biodiversity Metric which demonstrates a 11.59% net gain is achievable by way of onsite biodiversity gains. However, this is not so significant as to warrant a legal agreement for monitoring. The informative attached details that the proposed net gain shall be secured post-decision.

Conclusions:

The proposed store / garage building at South Lodge hotel is considered to be in accordance with all relevant local and national planning policies.

Recommendation: Application Permitted

Conditions:

2 **Standard Time Condition**: The development hereby permitted shall begin before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

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

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to control the development in detail in the interests of visual amenity and in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

4 **Regulatory Condition:** Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order amending or revoking and/or re-enacting that Order), the building hereby permitted shall be used for storage purposes in relation to the wider South Lodge site only and for no other purposes whatsoever, without express planning consent from the Local Planning Authority first being obtained.

Reason: Changes of use as permitted by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order or Use Classes Order 1987 are not considered appropriate in this location under Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

NOTE TO APPLICANT

Biodiversity Net Gain Condition
Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 states that planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the "biodiversity gain condition" which means development granted by this notice must not begin unless:

(a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
(b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission is Horsham District Council.

This permission will require the submission and approval of a Biodiversity Gain Plan before development is begun.

For guidance on the contents of the Biodiversity Gain Plan that must be submitted and agreed by the Council prior to the commencement of the consented development please see the link:
Submit a biodiversity gain plan - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

Statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements
There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. These can be found at Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 74-003-20240214 of the Planning Practice Guidance, which can be found at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain.

Irreplaceable habitat
If the onsite habitat includes irreplaceable habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans.

Great Crested Newts

The applicant is reminded that, under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), it is an offence to (amongst other things): deliberately capture, disturb, injure, or kill great crested newts; damage or destroy a breeding or resting place; intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a resting or sheltering place. Planning permission for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this legislation. Should great crested newts be found at any stage of the development works, then all works should cease, and a professional and/or suitably qualified and experienced ecologist (or Natural England) should be contacted for advice on any special precautions before continuing, including the need for a licence.

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/25/0066
Schedule of plans/documents **approved**:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Supporting Statement	Water Neutrality and External Materials	NONE	05.02.2025
Supporting Docs	BNG Metric	NONE	17.01.2025
Supporting Docs	Biodiversity Gain Plan	NONE	17.01.2025
Supporting Docs	Pre-Development Plan Baseline Map	NONE	17.01.2025
Supporting Docs	Planning Statement	NONE	24.01.2025
Elevation & Floor plan	Proposed, Roof, Block and Location	2453.5.4 - 01 REV C	21.02.2025

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Joshua Lee Date: 17.03.2025

Authorising Officer sign/initial RHERMITAGE Date: 20.03.2025