DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/25/0230
56B West Street, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 1PL

DESCRIPTION:

Retention of front shutter, facia signboard and projecting side signboard (Retrospective)

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/10/2119	Change of use from recruitment agency (A2) to financial services (A2) (Certificate of Lawful Development - Proposed)	Application Permitted on 18.11.2010

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

56B West Street is situated within the built-up area, primary shopping area, and designated Horsham Conservation. West Street is enclosed predominantly by 3 storey buildings of a mix of design and styles, most of which comprise commercia and retail premises.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

The application seeks for the retention of a roller security shutter, facia signboard, and internally illuminated hanging sign to the shop front.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):
Policy 14 - Shop Fronts and Advertisements
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles
Policy 34 - Cultural and Heritage Assets

Horsham Blueprint Business Neighbourhood Forum is a designated body of the Unparished Area of Horsham Town. The Forum comprises of representatives from Denne Neighbourhood Council, Forest Neighbourhood Council and Trafalgar Neighbourhood Council. The Horsham Blueprint Business Neighbourhood Forum's Neighbourhood Plan area has been designated.
Policy HB3: Character of Development
Policy HB4: Design of Development

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old, the most important policies for the determination of this application must be considered as to whether they are 'out of date' (NPPF paragraph 11d).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 2.9 years. 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 4: Horsham Town
Strategic Policy 19: Development Quality
Strategic Policy 20: Development Principles
Policy 21: Heritage Assets and Managing Change within the Historic Environment
Policy 22: Shop Fronts and Advertisements
Strategic Policy 23: Infrastructure Provision

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: Objection

Objections raised about the proposed signage and installation of roller shutters and the impact of amenity in Horsham Town Conservation Area.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS:

Representations:

1 letter of Objection has been received from Horsham Society, objecting to the application on the following grounds:

- Inappropriate and out of context with the Conservation Area
- Do not preserve or enhance the character

Parish Comments:

Horsham Denne Neighbourhood Council: Objection

The Neighbourhood Council supports the comments of HDC Conservation Officer regarding the signage which they consider too large for the size of the premises and should be removed.

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 main considerations material to this application relate to:

Design 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 34 of the HDPF recognises that heritage assets are irreplaceable resources, and as such the Council will sustain and enhance the historic environment through positive management of development affecting heritage assets. Development will be required to reinforce the special character of the District's 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, and 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.

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 integrates well with its surroundings, meets the changing needs of residents, and minimises the impact on the natural environment.

56B West Street is situated within the Horsham Conservation Area where development should seek to preserve or enhance the special historic and architectural character of the area. West Street is enclosed predominantly by 3 storey buildings that form a strong linear character. A variety of building styles and materials are evident, with a predominance of brick and painted plaster. These features introduce contrast, irregularity and rhythm to the streetscene consolidated by the use of traditional materials. The qualities of shop fronts and signage play a key role in contributing to this historic character and sense of place.

The application relates to the installation of a security shutter to the front of the building. Whilst it is recognised that this feature is semi-permanent within the street scene, being mostly visible when the shop is closed, the fixing and attachment is visible throughout. The security shutter is a robust product which creates a perception of mass and weight that detracts from the modest character of the modest shop front.

Following consultation with the Council's Design and Conservation Officer, the shutter would not reflect the appearance of the host building and would result in an unsympathetic and incongruous addition to

the application building and the streetscene as a whole. This is particularly noticeable in this pedestrianised location, where the interaction between the street and the storefronts provides an active frontage which also contributes to the conservation area's character.

Whilst it is appreciated that this is desired to deter thieves, the development is considered to have a harmful visual impact on the character of the Conservation Area and the visual amenity of the street scene, contrary to the above policies.

Residential Amenity:

Policy 33 of the HDPF states that development should be designed to avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of occupiers/users of nearby property and land, for example through overlooking or noise, whilst having regard to the sensitivities of surrounding development.

It is considered that the nature and siting of the security shutter would result in no adverse harm to the amenities of residential properties or users of land.

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 (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 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 and is retrospective.

Other Matters:

The fascia sign and projecting sign are subject of a separate Advertisement Consent application under reference DC/25/0231.

Conclusions:

The development does not preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area or the visual amenities of the street scene. The development is therefore considered contrary to Policies 33 and 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and Policies HB4 and HB5 of the Horsham Blueprint Business Neighbourhood Plan.

Recommendation: Application Refused

Reason(s) for Refusal:

1. The front shutter, including the fixing and attachment, results in a visual mass and weight that detracts from the modest proportions and character of the shop front, and fails to reflect the traditional features within the designated Conservation Area. The development therefore results in an unsympathetic and incongruous addition to the application building and the streetscene as a whole, contrary to Policies 33 and 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and Policies HB4 and HB5 of the Horsham Blueprint Business Neighbourhood Plan.

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/25/0230

Schedule of plans/documents **not approved**:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Location & Block plan	Location Plan Block Plan	206 - 03/MT	13.02.2025
Elevation plan	Pre-Existing Ground Floor Plan, Front Elevation, Side Elevation-Section	206 - 01/MT	13.02.2025
Elevation plan	Existing Ground Floor Plan, Front Elevation, Side Elevation-Section	206 - 02/MT	13.02.2025

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Meg Bayliss Date: 23/04/2025

Authorising Officer sign/initial Tamara Dale Date: 28/04/2025