Horsham District Council

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:
DC/25/0749
The Old Barn, London Road, Ashington, West Sussex, RH20 3BT

DESCRIPTION:
Demolition of existing buildings and provision of 2no. new modular buildings to provide customer handover area.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/19/1222	Variation of condition 1 to previously approved DC/16/0966 (Erection of two storey building) Relating to size, position of windows, roller shutters and colour.	Application Permitted on 30.09.2019

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The application is located on the western side of London Road. The main property is a two-storey brick-built office building located on the northern boundary. The building is situated on elevated ground where the land drops towards the east of the site. The site is enclosed by large commercial properties comprising a range of prefabricated-type buildings set back from A24 carriageway along a slip road.

The application site is located within the rural countryside. However, the site does not fall within a Conservation Area and nor is the main building listed.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

The proposal seeks planning permission for the demolition of the existing brick built office building and replacing it with 2 no. modular buildings to provide an area where mobile homes and caravans can be handed over to the customer after purchase.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES
The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):
Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development
Policy 10 - Rural Economic Development
Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles
Policy 41 - Parking

Ashington Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2031
Policy Ash1 – Overall Spatial Strategy for Ashington

Parish Design Statement:
None

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:

Southern Water: No Objection
Southern Water has determined that the flow rate for the above site will remain consistent, so capacity is not an issue and no Southern Water assets will be affected. Therefore, Southern Water has no objections to this proposal.

Economic Development: No Objection
Economic Development supports the proposed development to provide a dedicated undercover handover area at the site.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS:
Representations:
None received.

Parish Comments:
Ashington Parish Council: Raised no objection.

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

The application has been assessed on the basis of the submitted details, together with the planning history of the site and adjacent properties, available images and photographs supplied by the agent. These details were considered sufficient to allow the application to be properly considered and determined.

Principle of Development:

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 of, the countryside; and either be contained wherever possible within suitably located buildings which are appropriate for conversion, or in the case of an established industrial estate, within the existing

boundaries of the estate; or result in substantial environmental improvement and reduce the impact on the countryside, particularly if there are exceptional circumstances where new or replacement buildings are involved.

Policy 26 of the HDPF states that outside built-up area boundaries, the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside will be protected against inappropriate development. Any proposal must be essential to its countryside location, and in addition meet one of the following criteria: support the needs of agriculture or forestry; enable the extraction of minerals or the disposal of waste; provide for quiet informal recreational use; or enable the sustainable development of rural areas. In addition, proposals must be of a scale appropriate to its countryside character and 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.

Policy 9 of the HDPF redevelopment of employment sites and premises outside Key Employment Areas, must demonstrate that the site/premises is no longer needed and/or viable for employment use.

Policy Ash1 of the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan states that development proposals outside the built-up area boundary and the site allocations will not be permitted unless:

i. they represent appropriate uses in the countryside, such as agriculture, forestry, horticulture, fishing and equestrian activities, tourism, essential utilities infrastructure and energy generation;
ii. they are on previously developed land and accord with local and national policy for such development;
iii. they relate to the retention of existing and appropriate provision of new commercial businesses.

The proposal seeks permission for the redevelopment of the site by demolishing of existing office buildings and erecting 2 no. new modular buildings to provide customer handover area. The proposal would not be considered to be of an inappropriate scale and would maintain and improve working conditions within the site. The proposed development does not entail a change of use. The proposed enhancement would improve the site's operational capacity in an increasingly competitive market environment. The Council's Economic Development team considers the development would support not only the applicant business but also the wider economic vitality of the District. It is therefore viewed that the proposal would update the vitality and viability of the site therefore acceptable in principle, subject to all other material considerations.

Character and Appearance:

Policies 25, 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) 2015 states that development should be of a scale, massing and appearance that is of a high standard of design and layout, which relates sympathetically to the built surroundings, landscape, and open spaces of the surroundings.

Furthermore, policy 10 of the HDPF 2015 seeks to ensure that new development are contained within suitably located buildings in the existing boundaries of the estate. New buildings or development in the rural area will be acceptable provided that it supports sustainable economic growth towards balanced living and working communities.

The proposal would demolish existing office buildings and erect 2 no. modular buildings. The proposal would support the growing caravan and motorhome business with the provision of additional commercial units. The development would be sited within the existing boundaries of the business. The resulting scale and form of the buildings would be in keeping with surrounding industrial units when viewed in context of the application site.

The proposal would have no adverse impact on the character or appearance of the existing buildings or wider surrounding area. It is therefore considered that the visual impact of the proposal is acceptable and would accord with relevant policies of the HDPF.

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 proposal does not seek to change the use of the premises / site, with the proposal seeking to improve the quality of the buildings on-site. The arrangement of the proposed buildings, the nature of the development and the relationship with neighbouring commercial properties, would not result in any unacceptable impact upon neighbouring amenity. It is noted that no neighbouring representations have been received.

The proposal is considered in accordance with Policies 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework in regards to the impact on neighbouring amenity.

Economic Development:

Following consultation with the Council's Economic Development Officer, it is considered the proposed enhancement would contribute positively to the consumer experience and improve the site's operational capacity in an increasingly competitive market environment.

Horsham District Council plays a key role in supporting sustainable economic growth across the District. Facilitating developments of this nature helps to remove barriers to business success, creating the conditions for ongoing investment and economic resilience.

The proposal aligns with the guiding principles of Enterprise Horsham, particularly the focus on nurturing business development. Supporting the continued growth and improvement of local enterprises contributes to the productivity, resilience, and long-term sustainability of the local economy. This development is therefore supported, as it will support not only the applicant business but also the wider economic vitality of the District.

Water Neutrality:

The proposal relates to the demolition of an existing office buildings and the provision of 2 no. new modular buildings. The submitted Design and Access Statement explains that the new buildings would not have connection to the mains water supply. The proposed buildings would simply provide a covered area to be used when caravans and motorhomes are handed over to the customer. As such, there is no clear or compelling evidence to suggest the nature and scale of the proposed development, which would not amount to a change of use or introduce activity onto the site which is not already taking place, 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 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 193 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 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 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. The modular buildings, following the demolition of the existing office building, would be erected on the same footprint area and existing hardstanding.

Conclusions:

The proposal would accord with relevant local and national planning policies and is therefore recommended for approval.

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)	321.9	448.6	-126.7
		Total Gain	**-126.7**
		Total Demolition	**448.6**

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 **Post-Occupation Condition**: Upon the occupation of the modular buildings hereby permitted, the existing building(s) indicated on plan PL01 and PL02 shall cease to be used for any purpose whatsoever and within a period of 3 months thereafter such existing building(s) shall be demolished (including the removal of foundations). All materials arising from such demolition removed from the site and the site of the demolished building restored.

Reason: The retention of existing buildings together with the new buildings would result in the proliferation of buildings on the site, detracting from the character of the area which would be contrary to Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

4 **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).

5 **Regulatory Condition**: The modular buildings hereby permitted, as indicated on the approved plans, shall be used in association with the Sussex Caravan and Motorhome business operating from the site as set out in the Design & Access Statement dated April 2025. The modular buildings shall not be used for any other purpose without express planning consent from the Local Planning Authority first being obtained.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to control the use of the site and because other uses would be contrary to Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

6 **Regulatory Condition**: No external lighting or floodlighting shall be installed without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

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

7 **Regulatory Condition**: No works relating to the construction of the development hereby approved shall take place outside of 08:00 hours to 18:00 hours Mondays to Fridays and 08:00 hours to 13:00 hours on Saturdays nor at any time on Sundays, Bank or public Holidays, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

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

INFORMATIVE

The applicant is reminded that the surface water should not be disposed of into a public foul sewer and must comply with the Hierarchy of H3 of the Building Regulations. For more details, refer to the Drainage and Waste Disposal: Approved Document H on the GOV.UK website.

Any new connections to the public sewerage system will require a New Sewer Connection application (also known as a Section 106) to be submitted and approved by Southern Water.

Due to legislative changes effective from 1st October 2011 regarding the ownership of sewers, it is possible that some previously private sewers, now deemed public, could be crossing the above property and may not be shown on Southern Water records. Therefore, if any additional sewers are discovered during construction, an investigation will be required to determine their condition, the number of properties served, and potential access methods before any further work can proceed on site.

INFOMATIVE

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.

Under Regulations 4, 5, 7 & 8 of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024 the statutory biodiversity gain condition required by Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) does not apply in relation to planning permission for development which:

1. does not impact an onsite priority habitat (a habitat specified in a list published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat (a hedgerow habitat or watercourse habitat identified for the purposes of the biodiversity metric);

2. is the subject of a householder application within the meaning of article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015;

3. is undertaken solely or mainly for the purpose of fulfilling, in whole or in part, the biodiversity gain planning condition which applies in relation to another development (In determining whether a development is undertaken solely or mainly for this purpose, no account is to be taken of any facility for the public to access or to use the site for educational or recreational purposes, if that access or use is permitted without the payment of a fee);

4. consists of no more than 9 dwellings, is carried out on a site which has an area no larger than 0.5 hectares, and consists exclusively of dwellings which are self-build or custom housebuilding ("Self-build or custom housebuilding" has the same meaning as in section 1(A1) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended)).

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.

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.

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/25/0749
Schedule of plans/documents **approved**:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Location & Block plan	Sections	PL01	06.05.2025
Elevation & Floor plan	Existing	PL02	06.05.2025
Elevation & Floor plan	Proposed	PL03	06.05.2025
Supporting Statement	Planning, Design and Access	NJA/24/303	06.05.2025

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial	Halima Chowdhury	Date:	15.07.2025
Authorising Officer sign/initial	RHERMITAGE	Date:	29.07.2025