

From: Tim Rodway | Rodway Planning <tim@rodwayplanning.co.uk>
Sent: 25 July 2026 17:57
To: Tamara.Dale
Subject: RE: DC/26/0953 - Model Bakery, 119 High Street

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear Tamara,

I refer to your email of 17th July 2026 in respect of the above Planning Application.

We have liaised with the Applicants, and the property's Agent (HJ Burt) in respect of your query. In addition to the information contained within our original suite of Planning Application documents (including the marketing information supplied by HJ Burt), we can now respond to you as follows:

The property possesses a number of inherent physical and operational constraints, with prohibitive associated cost implications, which significantly limit its suitability for continued or alternative commercial occupation.

The building is of an older construction and is constrained by its existing layout and configuration. The accommodation is fragmented, with a relatively small retail frontage and extensive rear bakery accommodation that has been specifically configured for its former use. The internal arrangement does not readily lend itself to modern commercial requirements without substantial alteration.

The property also benefits from only limited on-site parking and servicing space, restricting its attractiveness to a wide range of commercial occupiers. Modern businesses typically require adequate customer and staff parking together with practical servicing arrangements, neither of which can be satisfactorily accommodated at the site.

Furthermore, the building is in a poor state of repair and decorative condition. The former bakery contains extensive redundant commercial bakery equipment that is no longer economically viable, which will require specialist removal at considerable cost. In addition, the floors, walls and ceilings require comprehensive refurbishment, whilst the electrical installation and other building services would require replacement or significant upgrading. Parts of the rear bakery accommodation also suffer from poor levels of natural light, further reducing their suitability for modern commercial occupation.

The cost of undertaking the necessary refurbishment and modernisation works, together with the removal of obsolete plant and machinery, would be substantial. When considered alongside the building's physical limitations, these costs render the retention or conversion of the premises to an alternative commercial use economically unattractive and commercially unviable.

The property's configuration and location are also unlikely to appeal to alternative commercial users such as office, showroom or studio occupiers. The fragmented floorplate, restricted parking provision and servicing constraints all detract from its attractiveness when compared with more modern commercial premises available in more suitable locations. In addition, contemporary commercial occupiers increasingly expect modern environmental systems, including air conditioning and upgraded mechanical and electrical services, the installation of which would require further significant capital expenditure and would exacerbate the lack of commercial viability.

Taken together, the marketing evidence and the property's inherent physical, operational and economic constraints clearly demonstrate that there is no realistic prospect of the building being retained in, or successfully adapted to, an alternative commercial use. By contrast, the proposed residential conversion represents a viable and sustainable long-term use that will secure the future of the building, bring a vacant and deteriorating property back into beneficial use and contribute to the delivery of much-needed housing without adversely affecting the vitality or viability of Steyning town centre, particularly given the site's position outside the designated retail frontage

Ultimately the huge cost of bringing this building back into beneficial occupational use prohibits anything other than a residential end user, as the end values for any other use are too low to make development for those purposes unviable. This is further evidenced in that the HJ Burt marketing attracted no enquiries from parties interested in retaining or exploring the existing commercial use of the property. HJ Burt have confirmed *"A total of four offers were received during the marketing period, all of which were submitted by parties intending to redevelop the site for residential purposes."*

There are clear signs within Steyning itself that there are more vacant shops and units. The antique shop, which is located centrally next to the public car park on the High Street, has been empty for over a year. The tea rooms at the south end of the High Street now benefits from planning permission for change of use to residential having not been able to sell for commercial purposes, just like the property next door that used to be an estate agent 20 years ago. The former Springwells Hotel is now a residential unit following permission for change of use. A significant number of units in Cobblestone Walk are empty, and there are several other units that over time have stopped trading and are now houses along the High Street and Church Lane.

We trust that this information is of assistance. If you have any further queries then please do not hesitate to contact us.

Best regards,

Tim

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From: Tamara.Dale <Tamara.Dale@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 17 July 2026 16:19
To: Tim Rodway | Rodway Planning <tim@rodwayplanning.co.uk>
Subject: DC/26/0953 - Model Bakery, 119 High Street

Hi Tim,

I am just looking over the above application which I have been allocated.

While I note the letter from HJ Burt that refers to the marketing of the property since April 2025, and acknowledge the planning history of the site, the application does not reference or demonstrate why the property could not be used for alternative commercial uses. While it is recognised that the site is located outside of the Steyning Town Centre, given the current commercial status of the building, it would be expected that justification be provided to demonstrate why alternative commercial uses have been explored and discounted.

I would be grateful for any further information you can provide, and should you have any questions, please let me know.

Kind regards,

Tamara

Tamara Dale

Principal Planning Officer

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