



TO: Planning Committee North

BY: Head of Development and Building Control

DATE: 2nd November 2021

DEVELOPMENT: Construction of a new roof. Installation of solar panels, an air source heat pump and installation of rooflights and windows (part-retrospective).

SITE: St Peters Hall Three Acres Horsham West Sussex RH12 1RS

WARD: Denne

APPLICATION: DC/21/1364

APPLICANT: **Name:** Peter Williams **Address:** Locke King House 2 Balfour Road Weybridge KT13 8HD

REASON FOR INCLUSION ON THE AGENDA: The site is owned by the District Council.

RECOMMENDATION: To approve planning permission subject to appropriate conditions

1. THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

To consider the planning application.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

1.1 Part-retrospective planning permission is sought for alterations to the buildings at St Peters Hall in Horsham, a site owned by Horsham District Council. The alterations are:

- The installation of two solar photovoltaic arrays (one to the southern roofslope of the nursery school building, and one to the flat roof of the six-bay garage building to the rear of the site);
- Installation of three rooflights to the northern roofslope of the main hall building;
- The installation of five windows and one door to the eastern elevation of the RAFA club building;
- The removal of two four-paned window units (one to the ground floor and one to the mezzanine level) to the northern elevation of the main hall building;
- The removal of four four-paned window units to the southern elevation at mezzanine level;
- The removal of one door and window to the ground floor of the southern elevation, and associated cladding;
- The widening of an existing door to the southern elevation;
- Re-roofing of the main hall building, and;
- The installation of an air source heat pump with associated acoustic screening to the northern elevation of the building, facing the car park.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

- 1.2 The application relates to a cluster of existing community centre buildings sited on the western side of Three Acres, on the junction to Blackbridge Lane, containing a nurse's, RAFA Club, and St Peter's Hall building. The site comprises an area some 0.23ha in size, with single and two storey former farm buildings composed of a stock brick facing with red brick quoining, and pitched tiled roofs and flat roof elements. The site also includes a six-bay flat roofed garage block to the rear of the site close to the boundary to the neighbouring property to the north, no. 22 Three Acres. The site comprises some planting to the southern and eastern boundaries with close boarded fencing.
- 1.3 The wider surrounding area is predominantly composed of detached and terraced dwellings, with flatted accommodation to the east and south, in addition to retail units to the south on Blackbridge Lane. The site is located within the built-up area boundary of Horsham.

2. INTRODUCTION

STATUTORY BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The following Policies are considered to be relevant to the assessment of this application:

National Planning Policy Framework

Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF 2015)

- Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development
- Policy 24 - Strategic Policy: Environmental Protection
- Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
- 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 38 - Strategic Policy: Flooding
- Policy 39 - Strategic Policy: Infrastructure Provision
- Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport
- Policy 41 - Parking
- Policy 42 - Strategic Policy: Inclusive Communities
- Policy 43 - Community Facilities, Leisure and Recreation

PLANNING HISTORY AND RELEVANT APPLICATIONS

HU/208/58	Conversion of barn into Sunday school Comment: And b. regs (From old Planning History)	Application Permitted on 09.09.1958
DC/07/2833	Change of use from band practice hall (sui generis) to D1 use class comprising pre-school (maximum hours 8am - 6pm) and music, drama and art activities (6pm - 9pm)	Application Permitted on 08.02.2008
HU/71/53	Horsham silver band practice room Comment: H.u.d.c (From old Planning History)	Application Permitted on 06.06.1953

DC/04/1476	Demolition of existing garages, erection of single-storey courtyard extension, new facade to Blackbridge Lane and internal alterations	Application Permitted on 05.10.2004
HU/268/86	External fire escape (From old Planning History)	Application Permitted on 02.10.1986
HU/320/75	Use of premises for the storage of sheet glass (From old Planning History)	Application Permitted on 04.02.1976

3. OUTCOME OF CONSULTATIONS

- 3.1 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

INTERNAL CONSULTATIONS

HDC Environmental Health: No Objection, subject to conditions (attached)

OUTSIDE AGENCIES

WSCC Highways: No Objection, subject to condition (attached)

Southern Water: No Objection

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

- 3.2 Denne Neighbourhood Council have raised *no objection* to this proposal.
- 3.3 No letters of representation have been received.

4. HOW THE PROPOSED COURSE OF ACTION WILL PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS

- 4.1 Article 8 (Right to respect of a Private and Family Life) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (Protection of Property) of the Human Rights Act 1998 are relevant to this application, Consideration of Human rights forms part of the planning assessment below.

5. HOW THE PROPOSAL WILL HELP TO REDUCE CRIME AND DISORDER

- 5.1 It is not considered that the development would be likely to have any significant impact on crime and disorder.

6. PLANNING ASSESSMENTS

Design and Appearance

- 6.1 Policy 32 of the Horsham District Planning Framework 2015 (HDPF) states that good design is a key element in sustainable development and seeks to ensure that development promotes a high standard of urban design, architecture and landscape. Policy 33 of the HDPF states that development proposals should make efficient use of land, ensures that the scale, massing and appearance of the development is to a high standard, is locally distinctive in character, uses high standards of building materials, finishes and landscaping, and presumes in favour of the retention of existing important landscaping and natural features.

- 6.2 The site is owned by the District Council and contains various community uses. The proposal seeks various alteration to provide facilities for the disabled, a schedule of maintenance and 'Greening' of the premises utilising a Government Grant that the Authority was successful in obtaining in February 2021. The proposal also comprises various alterations to the external elevations of the buildings.
- 6.3 At the time that Officers attended a visit to the site (25th August 2021), it was noted that the majority of the works had already commenced on the site, with most of the external alterations having already being completed.
- 6.4 The alterations already undertaken to the windows and fenestration match the appearance and character of the existing parts of the building, thus are not considered to appear out of character. The rooflights installed are conservation style, featuring a low profile and a central glazing bar. The replacement tiling to the main roof of the building, including a small portion of the RAFA roof, match those pre-existing, albeit lighter in colour- the tiles will weather with age to match the darker appearing tiles the remaining parts of the building. Officers raise no concerns with regards to the external appearance and elevational treatment proposed and already undertaken as part of the proposal.
- 6.5 The solar array installed to the southern roofslope of the nursery building covers approximately 50% of the roof and is visible from the street on Blackbridge Lane. The solar array to the rear garage block covers the entire roof, installed in three rows tilted at a 30degree angle and would only be visible from a first floor viewpoint. Overall, the solar arrays are not considered to visually detract from the character and appearance of the building.
- 6.6 The proposed air source heat pump (ASHP) is to be located to the rear of the building facing north, to the rear / side of the main hall building within the car park, and would include an enclosed acoustic screen. The enclosure would be located to the rear of the building away from immediate public view, comprising a height of 2.5m. Depending on the outcome of acoustic assessments for the ASHP, the screen may not be required (further detailed below). In the event that a screen is needed, the submitted details indicate that the screen would comprise a rookwool batts-like appearance (insulation) set behind a black painted mesh fencing. Whilst the screen would be predominantly hidden from public view, it is considered that the appearance of the screen could be improved. As there is no objection to the principle of such a screen in this location, and there is possibility that it is not needed, a condition has been attached to ensure that the final detail of its appearance if first approved by the Council prior to its installation.
- 6.7 With the above in mind, the proposed external alterations are not considered to adversely impact on the setting or character of the clusters of buildings or the wider surrounding area. As such, the proposal is considered in accordance with Policy 32 and 33 of the HDPF.

Amenity Impact

- 6.8 Policy 33(2) of the HDPF states that permission will be granted for development that does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of the occupiers/users of nearby properties and land.
- 6.9 The proposal would not introduce any additional built form, height, or bulk to the building compared to the pre-existing arrangement, nor introduce any windows to the first floor elevations. Furthermore, the proposal would not result in any increased activity on the site over and above the existing use. As such, the proposal would not amount to any adverse harm with regards to overlooking, overbearing, or overshadowing.
- 6.10 The new ASHP would be located to the rear of the building, within the car park of the site, and would be enclosed within an acoustic screen (if necessary). Following consultation with

the Council's Environmental Health Officers, it was considered that the proposed screen could adequately control noise emissions that could be harmful to neighbouring amenity. It was further noted that a noise survey will be undertaken once installed to ascertain whether the screen would be required. In light of this, a condition has been suggested to ensure that noise levels would be acceptable to a certain standard and within a reasonable timeframe of their installation. As such, no concerns are raised to this regard.

- 6.11 With the above in mind, the proposed works would not result in any harm to neighbouring amenity, in accordance with Policy 33(2) of the HDPF.

Climate change

- 6.12 HDPF 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.
- 6.13 The proposal incorporates a number of works to increase the sustainability of the site as a whole, including;
- internal and external insulation
 - installation of solar photovoltaic arrays
 - installation of an air source heat pump
- 6.14 The proposed works as listed above are considered to result in an overall improvement to the thermal efficiency and energy consumption of one of the Council's assets, and would contribute Council's aim to improve to overall sustainability of its property in response to climate change. As such, the proposal is considered to accord with HDPF Policies 35, 36, and 37.

Other Matters

- 6.15 The proposed ASHP would be located in the location of an existing car parking space, thus result in the loss of one car parking space. Given the location of the site within a predominantly residential area, the loss of one space is not considered to adversely affect accessibility of the site in terms of car use. Following consultation with WSCC Highway Team, no objection was raised with regards to the above. Furthermore, the applicant has stated that the proposal incorporates the provision of two Sheffield cycle parking stands to serve four bikes, provision which is currently absent on the site. The proposal would therefore facilitate sustainable transport methods. No details other than stating they would be located to the rear have been provided. A pre-occupation condition is therefore attached to ensure that this detail is provided prior to the site being bought back into use. No works are proposed to the existing access to the site. As such, the proposal is considered to accord with HDPF Policies 40 and 41.
- 6.16 In addition to the numerous external alterations being made as above, the proposal also incorporates several internal changes to improve accessibility for disabled users of the site including level access into the building and wheelchair compliant ramps internally. The proposal therefore provides positive measures to incorporate the needs of the community, helping create a more socially inclusive environment, in accordance with HDPF Policy 42.

Conclusion

- 6.17 Overall, the proposed works do not detract from the character and appearance of the building or the wider surrounding area, and would not adversely impact on the amenities of the adjoining neighbouring properties. Furthermore, the proposal incorporates a number of

measures to combat climate change, in addition to measures to create a more socially inclusive asset to the community.

- 6.18 For the reasons outlined above, Officers recommend that part-retrospective consent is granted, subject to the conditions listed below.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Conditions:

1 **A list of the approved plans**

- 2 **Pre-Commencement (Installation) Condition:** Notwithstanding the submitted details, details including materials of the final proposed design and appearance of the acoustic screen to the northern elevation of the main part of the building shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to its installation. The works shall thereafter be undertaken in strict accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of visual and neighbouring amenity, in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 3 **Pre-Occupation Condition:** Prior to building being bought back into use, details of the proposed cycle parking facilities shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be undertaken in strict accordance with the approved detail and maintained in perpetuity unless otherwise agreed to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that adequate cycle parking facilities are provided to accommodate the needs of the site, in accordance with Policy 41 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 4 **Regulatory Condition:** The Noise rating level from any mechanical equipment or building services plant shall not exceed 3dB below background noise level when assessed outside the window of the nearest noise sensitive commercial or residential premises. Within 6 weeks of the date of commissioning all equipment and plant, a noise assessment shall be carried out to confirm the noise target has been met for both day and night time operation. The assessment of the acoustic impact arising from the operation of the building services plant shall be undertaken in accordance with BS 4142: 2014 (or subsequent superseding equivalent) and other relevant measures. Any additional steps required to mitigate the noise impact shall be identified and implemented within 3 months of operation commencing. The post installation noise assessment shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The details as approved shall thereafter be permanently retained.

Reason: In the interest of amenity in accordance with Policy 33(2) of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).