



PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

TO: Planning Committee North

BY: Head of Development and Building Control

DATE: 14 June 2023

DEVELOPMENT: Removal of existing shed and part demolition of an outbuilding to provide parking. Alterations to fencing to alter access and vehicular access from the Cemetery. Replacement of an existing window and addition of a door.

SITE: Cemetery Lodge Guildford Road Horsham West Sussex RH12 1TT

WARD: Denne

APPLICATION: DC/23/0304

APPLICANT: **Name:** Horsham District Council **Address:** Parkside Chart Way Horsham West Sussex RH12 1RL

REASON FOR INCLUSION ON THE AGENDA: The application was made by Horsham District Council.

RECOMMENDATION: To approve planning permission subject to appropriate conditions

1. THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

1.1 To consider the planning application.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

1.2 The application is seeking planning permission for the removal of existing shed and part demolition of an outbuilding in order to provide on-site parking. The application also proposes alterations to fencing to alter the access and vehicular access from the Cemetery, together with the replacement of an existing window and the addition of a door.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

1.3 The application site comprises a two-storey detached dwelling that sits in at the entrance to Hills Cemetery, in the North-East corner of the site. It is located within the built-up area of Horsham. It is noted that a number of dwellings back onto the cemetery and the Lodge.

2. INTRODUCTION

STATUTORY BACKGROUND

2.1 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

Contact Officer: Bethan Tinning

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

2.3 **National Planning Policy Framework**

2.4 **Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF 2015)**

Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development

Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity

Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development

Policy 33 - Development Principles

Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport

Policy 41 - Parking

2.5 **Horsham Blueprint Business Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2036**

Policy HB3 – Character of Development

Policy HB4 – Design of Development

2.6 **PLANNING HISTORY AND RELEVANT APPLICATIONS**

DC/14/2500	Existing Staff Mess Room - Mess Room to have layout alterations, Structural strengthening and refurbishment works including infilling existing external door with masonry to match and small window and new Velux rooflights to roof (Certificate of Lawful Development - Existing)	Application Permitted on 19.12.2014
HU/266/79	2 storey extension to form office and 3rd bedroom (From old Planning History)	Application Permitted on 29.10.1979

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 AGENCIES

3.2 **HDC Waste:** None received (*any comments will be reported at Planning Committee*).

OUTSIDE AGENCIES

3.3 **Denne Neighbourhood Parish Council:** Objection. HDNC objected to the application until they received further information about the location of bin storage. There were queries about whether the collection vehicle can access the narrow road to Cemetery Lodge area, or if residents will be expected to wheel the bins up to Guildford Road which would not be satisfactory for an assisted living property.

3.4 **WSCC Highways:** The site is located and accessed via private access road that leads to the publicly maintained Guildford Road, an A-classified road subject to 30mph speed limit. The site is approx. 120m distant from the publicly maintained Guildford Road.

3.5 There are no visibility issues at the access point with Guildford Road. An inspection of data supplied to WSCC by Sussex Police over a period of the past five years reveals that there have been no recorded injury accidents at the access point with Guildford Road, caused by the road layout. Therefore there is no evidence to suggest that the existing access is operating unsafely or that the proposal would exacerbate an existing safety concern. This proposal is not anticipated to result in a material intensification of use onto Guildford Road.

- 3.6 Part of the existing outbuilding is to be demolished to accommodate a single disabled parking bay. The proposed disabled car parking bay complies with the minimum requirements of 2.4 x 4.8m plus 1.2m hatched area.
- 3.7 The LHA does not consider that this proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 111), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.
- 3.8 **Natural England:** Standing Advice:-
- 3.9 It cannot be concluded that existing abstraction within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone is not having an adverse effect on the integrity of the Arun Valley SAC/SPA/Ramsar sites. Developments within Sussex North must therefore must not add to this impact and one way of achieving this is to demonstrate water neutrality. The definition of water neutrality is the use of water in the supply area before the development is the same or lower after the development is in place.
- 3.10 To achieve this Natural England is working in partnership with all the relevant authorities to secure water neutrality collectively through a water neutrality strategy. Whilst the strategy is evolving, Natural England advises that decisions on planning applications should await its completion. However, if there are applications which a planning authority deems critical to proceed in the absence of the strategy, then Natural England advises that any application needs to demonstrate water neutrality.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

- 3.11 None received.

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

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 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.

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

- 6.1 The main issues are the principle of the development in the location and the effect of the development on:

- The character of the dwelling and visual amenities of the area.
- The impact on amenity.
- Highways.
- Water Neutrality.

Design and Appearance

- 6.2 Policy 32 of the Horsham District Planning Framework Policy (HDPF) relates to improving the quality of new development. It states that permission will be granted for developments which ensure the scale, massing, and appearance of the development is of a high standard of design which relates well to the host building and adjoining neighbouring properties. Policy 33 of the HDPF states amongst other criteria that extensions should have regard to their natural and built surroundings in terms of their design, scale and character. An extension should be of a scale which is sympathetic to and does not overpower the original building.
- 6.3 Policy HB3, Character of Development, 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 the 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. Innovation in design will be supported, however, where this demonstrably enhances the quality of the built form in a character area”*.
- 6.4 The proposed part-demolition of the outbuilding, which sits to the south of the Lodge, would remove the eastern part of the building. A shed to the west of the dwelling would also be removed, with new timber close board fencing implemented to separate the remaining outbuilding from the main dwellinghouse, as this remains in use by ground staff at the Cemetery. The outbuilding is not considered an intrinsic part of the Lodge, with the demolition having little harm on the setting of the main dwelling. It would open the outlook from the nearest windows on the main house, decluttering the site. The demolition would allow for a disabled car parking space, providing access to the dwelling from outside the main area of the Cemetery.
- 6.5 Minor alterations are proposed to the Lodge itself, with no change to the existing footprint, with the proposed replacement of an existing window and the addition of a door. A new access ramp is proposed on the eastern elevation, which would serve a new entry door. The existing door on the southern elevation will be removed and replaced with a window, as well as the existing door on the western elevation, which will be infilled. A further window on the southern elevation will also be removed. Furthermore, the existing chimney would be removed, which is not considered a feature of architectural significance. The alterations to the fenestration would have minor impacts on the character and appearance of the main dwellinghouse, with the relocation of the entrance to be accessible from outside the main Cemetery, considered to have little impact on the dwelling and surrounding area.
- 6.6 Alterations to the fencing to alter to the access are proposed to accommodate the creation of a ramp and off-street parking. With the main door relocated to the east elevation, a ramp is provided for access from the disabled car parking space. The ramp would be low to the ground and is not considered to significantly impact the appearance of the dwelling. In order to enable the installation of a ramp and off-street parking, part of the existing steel palisade fencing will be removed. The alterations would improve access for those with limited mobility. With further internal improvements proposed to the layout, maintaining appropriate levels of access and ample nature light.
- 6.7 The existing uPVC windows will be replaced with white painted timber sliding sash windows. The design of the replacement window will reflect the design of the original windows at the dwelling. As materials that closely match the existing dwellinghouse are proposed, it is

considered that the proposal would reflect the form, scale and detailing of the existing building and appear as coherent and sympathetic additions.

- 6.8 An external Air Source Heat Pump would be located on the south elevation, between the main building and outbuilding, providing heating for the building. This would sit more than 1m away from the curtilage boundary and would have no discernible impact on the character or appearance of the site or surrounding area.
- 6.9 Overall, the proposed development is considered appropriately designed and scaled in relation to the main dwellinghouse and surroundings. The combined impact of the proposal and alterations would result in significant improvements to energy efficiency and accessibility. It is therefore not considered that the works would have a detrimental impact on the appearance of the house or the wider area. With the above in mind, the proposal is considered to accord with Policies 32 and 33 of the HDPF in terms of its design, layout and appearance.

Impact on Amenity

- 6.10 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.
- 6.11 The relationship between the application site and adjoining properties and land together with the scale and nature of the proposed alterations is such that no unacceptable harm to amenity would result from the proposal.
- 6.12 The Neighbourhood Council's concerns, regarding bin storage and collection, on the proposal are acknowledged. However, the proposal does not amount to a change of use on the site and would not materially alter the nature of accommodation being provided, or the related off-site servicing arrangements. There is ample room for bin storage on site and the proposed development would not prejudice such storage taking place. It is considered that given the nature and extent of the works the bin storage and collection arrangements would not amount to any harm for which a refusal of planning permission would be warranted.
- 6.13 The proposed is therefore considered to accord with Policy 33(2) of the HDPF.

Impact on Parking Provision

- 6.14 Policies 40 and 41 of the Horsham District Planning Framework states that development should provide a safe and adequate access, suitable for all users. The proposed development would be served by a new access point
- 6.15 The proposal would not be expected to result in a material intensification of use of the existing access onto Guildford Road, and there are no visibility issues or concerns relating to this access point. The proposed parking space meets minimum size requirements for a single disabled parking bay and its provision is welcomed.
- 6.16 The Highway Authority does not consider that the proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 111), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal. There are considered to be no reasons to take a different view, and the highway impacts of the proposal are considered acceptable and in accordance with the above policies.

Water Neutrality

- 6.17 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.

Conclusion

- 6.18 Overall, the proposed development, given the nature of the proposal and the limited impact on both the existing dwelling and wider surroundings, is not anticipated to result in harm. The alterations to the access will result in an improvement to the pre-existing arrangements, that allows access for those with limited mobility, and without having to enter the cemetery. As such, the application is considered to be in accordance with Policy 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To approve the application subject to the following conditions:

1 **Approved Plans**

- 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).