

Our ref: 25-096

29 September 2025

Planning Department
Mid Sussex District Council
Oaklands Road
Haywards Heath
West Sussex
RH16 1SS

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Application to Vary Condition 2 of Planning Permission HK/027/89 – Horsted Keynes Business Park (Units B3 and B5)

We write on behalf of our client in support of an application to vary Condition 2 of planning permission HK/027/89 relating to Horsted Keynes Business Park. The proposal seeks to extend the hours of operation of Units B3 and B5, which are occupied by a single operator, to enable longer opening on Saturdays and additional opening on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

Site Context

Horsted Keynes Business Park is located to the north-west of Horsted Keynes village and accommodates a range of small-scale commercial and light industrial uses within converted and purpose-built units. The site is well established and plays an important role in supporting the rural economy of this part of Mid Sussex.

Proposals

Condition 2 of the 1989 permission currently restricts use of machinery, vehicles, plant and deliveries at the business park on Saturdays to 07:00–13:00, with no operation permitted on Sundays or Bank Holidays. This application seeks to vary the condition in

respect of Units B3 and B5 only, to allow operation until 16:30 on Saturdays and to permit Sunday and Bank Holiday opening between 09:00 and 15:30. Weekday operations are permitted between 07:00 and 18:00 however there is no proposal to amend these times.

It is suggested that the wording of condition 2 is amended to read:

“With the exception of activities related to the use of the part of the premises hatched in red on drawing BA-12-03-GA01 rev. 00, no machinery, vehicles or plant and no deliveries shall be operated on the site other than between the hours of:

07:00 and 18:00 Mondays – Fridays inclusive;

07:00 and 13:00 on Saturdays

Not at any time on Sundays or Public Holidays.

No machinery, vehicles or plant and no deliveries shall be operated on the site in relation to the use of the part of the premises hatched in red on drawing BA-12-03-GA01 rev. 00 other than between the hours of:

07:00 and 18:00 Mondays – Fridays inclusive;

07:00 and 16:30 on Saturdays

09:00 and 15:30 on Sundays or Public Holidays.”

Background Information

The units are occupied by *Giggleton*, a children’s activity centre with an ancillary café. The business provides immersive role-play activities for children aged 0–6, supporting educational development in a way that differs from typical physical play centres. It is important to note that the use itself falls within the scope of the authorised uses under the 1989 planning permission (owing to the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 and therefore does not require planning permission in its own right. However, it has recently come to light that the business is operating beyond the hours permitted by Condition 2, making this application necessary solely to extend the



hours of operation and thereby regularise the position. A supporting letter from the operator providing further background information is enclosed.

On Mondays-Fridays there are 2 x 2 hour play sessions, with one in the morning and one in the afternoon and a 1 hour turnaround between the two. On Saturdays there are 3 slightly shorter play sessions (between 1hr 15 mins and 1hr 30 mins in length) with turnaround time of between 45 mins and 1 hour. On Sundays there are 2 x 2 hour sessions taking the form of children's parties. The sessions are generally for a maximum of 20 children, however the parties can accommodate up to 30 children, though not every party will be of this size.

Due to the separation of the sessions with 'downtime' in between of 45 mins to 1 hour, this assists in ensuring that arrivals and departures from the site are staggered. Although most customers arrive by private vehicle, in many cases more than one child will be brought in one vehicle – for example, siblings, or parents may bring their child/children along with friend(s).

Benefits of the Use

The business delivers clear social and economic benefits. It employs several local people, supports secondary economic activity through procurement from local suppliers, and provides a unique rural leisure and educational offer. Weekend and Bank Holiday trade is essential to its long-term viability, given the nature of the clientele and the need for parents to attend outside standard working hours.

Brief Policy Overview

The December 2024 NPPF recognises the importance of supporting a prosperous rural economy, including the growth and expansion of all types of businesses in rural areas. In particular, paragraph 88 states that planning decisions should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas (both through conversion or existing buildings and well design new buildings), as well as enabling sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside.

Policy DP14 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 (Sustainable Rural Development and the Rural Economy) similarly supports small-scale rural economic development,



provided countryside character is respected, it supports sustainable growth and the vitality of the rural economy, and where possible utilises previously developed sites. In this instance, the proposals are modest, targeted, and contained within an existing building within an established business park, and are considered fully consistent with national and local policy objectives.

Planning Assessment

The application does not propose any change to the use itself nor to the overall hours of the wider business park. It applies only to Units B3 and B5, occupied by a single operator. Extending the Saturday hours to 16:30 and allowing Sunday and Bank Holiday operation between 09:00 and 15:30 is considered entirely reasonable.

Paragraph 57 of the NPPF states that planning conditions should be kept to a minimum and only imposed where they are necessary, relevant to planning, and to the development permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other aspects.

The original 1989 condition is now historic, predating the Sunday Trading Act 1994 which allowed greater commercial activity on Sundays via the opening of larger retail stores. Although the proposals do not concern a retail use, this illustrates the fact that at the time of the planning permission, overall commercial activity levels on Sundays were far more restricted than in the current era.

The reason given for the condition — “in the interest of amenity” — is general and not supported by evidence of any specific harm. The units are located at the south-eastern edge of the business park, away from the boundaries with residential properties to the west. The business park is contained by woodland to the south and east. Operations are contained within the building with windows and doors closed, minimising external noise. While there are some vehicle movements associated with customer visits, these occur during daytime hours and are not considered materially harmful to local amenity, particularly in the established business park context. The extended hours sought are at times when the remainder of the business park units are closed; this means there is less overall traffic during the additional periods sought than during the already permitted opening times of the business park as a whole. Although traffic movements associated



with the use are inevitable in a rural location, some parents / children car share and of course some parents will bring siblings in a single trip.

The units in question are the only part of the business park premises in use for the extended hours. There is allocated parking and discreet signage is used to identify this on site.

Conclusion

For the reasons set out above, it is considered that the proposed variation of Condition 2 to extend operational hours for Units B3 and B5 is justified, policy compliant, and is vitally important in order to support the continued success of a valuable local rural enterprise. We therefore respectfully request that the application be approved.

Should there be any queries or if any further information is required do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully,

C. Sampson

Christopher Sampson BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

Director,
For KLW Ltd

Encs: Photographs of premises
Supporting letter from applicant
Application form and site plan



Photographs of application premises:



