



Horsham
District
Council

HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
LOCATION:	Former Novartis Site Parsonage Road Horsham West Sussex
DESCRIPTION:	Residential development comprising approximately 206 dwellings, including the conversion of 'Building 3' and demolition of 'Building 36'. Vehicular access taken from Wimblehurst Road. Car and cycle parking, landscaping and open space and associated works. The replacement of the existing cedar trees at the site.
REFERENCE:	DC/25/0629
RECOMMENDATION:	Advice / No Objection / Objection / More Information / Modification / Refusal
SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION: Economic Development does not support this application.	

MAIN COMMENTS:

The proposal is entirely residential in nature and fails to demonstrate any commitment to providing updated or replacement commercial floorspace. There is a well-documented shortage of modern, fit-for-purpose commercial premises across the District, impacting both small and large businesses.

As outlined in the Council's Economic Strategy, maintaining a diverse range of commercial floorspace is critical to supporting business start-ups, growth, and retention within the District. This, in turn, is essential for sustaining local employment and a resilient economy.

We believe this site presents an opportunity to deliver a mixed-use development, where residential elements could enable the provision of high-quality commercial floorspace—particularly suited to the needs of small businesses.

Horsham District Council's Economic Development Department therefore strongly objects to this proposal in its current form, which comprises 100% residential use. The site is identified as a Key Employment Area (KEA) in the Local Plan (Parsonage Business Park, Parsonage Way, Horsham), and as such is protected for business, manufacturing, storage, and distribution uses. Policy requires that: "Redevelopment in the Key Employment Areas must not result in the overall loss of employment floorspace."

The current proposal is not compliant with this policy and undermines the economic objectives set out in the Local Plan.

In addition, the Council has recently published Enterprising Horsham — the new economic development framework for the District — which sets out our commitment to understanding and addressing the evolving needs of the local economy. This includes work to identify how best to bring forward new and adaptable employment workspace that meets current and emerging demands, aspirations, and business models.

As part of this programme, we are currently undertaking feasibility work to assess the demand and potential for delivering additional serviced office and flexible workspace across the District. We would therefore welcome the opportunity to engage with the County Council to explore how this site could contribute to those ambitions. In our view, there is real potential for a high-quality, sustainable, mixed-use scheme that appropriately balances residential development with the pressing need for modern commercial space — supporting both housing delivery and long-term economic vitality.

"Please note these comments are provided on a without prejudice basis to development management's wider consideration of all relevant planning policy and material planning considerations. These comments are not a formal indication that planning permission will be forthcoming and the advice does not bind Horsham District Council to a final recommendation on any planning application."

ANY RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS:

NAME:	Julie Cavallo
DEPARTMENT:	Enterprise
DATE:	19.05.25