

From: Daniel.Holmes
Sent: 13 August 2026 11:03:49 UTC+01:00
To: "East 2" <east2@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>
Cc: "Guy.Everest" <Guy.Everest@horsham.gov.uk>; "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>; "Matt Smith" <matt.smith@dm-planning.co.uk>
Subject: RE: Appeal 6007051 (LPA Ref: DC/26/0024) - Bentley House, North Heath Lane Industrial Estate, North Heath Lane, Horsham, RH12 5QE - Comments Requested

Dear PINS,

The Council considers that the proposed Main Modifications to Strategic Policy 30 are relevant to this appeal and attract moderate weight, reflecting their advanced stage in the Examination process. However, the modifications do not materially alter the Council's position regarding the appeal proposal.

The appeal site forms part of the long-established North Heath Lane employment area and has a lengthy planning history associated with office, industrial, workshop and storage uses. The site has historically operated as employment premises and remains capable of accommodating employment activity. Furthermore, North Heath Lane Industrial Estate is identified within emerging Strategic Policy 30 as a **Key Employment Area**, which is afforded the highest level of protection for employment uses under the emerging policy framework.

The Council notes that Main Modifications MM118-M124 reinforce the overall objective of Strategic Policy 30 to protect and support employment sites and premises. In particular, the revised supporting text confirms that opportunities for new employment land are limited and that it is important to make the best use of the existing stock of employment land and floorspace through retention, refurbishment and upgrading. The modified policy continues to protect employment sites outside Key Employment Areas for office, business, manufacturing, storage and distribution uses.

The Council further notes that paragraph 7 of the modified policy retains the requirement that proposals for alternative uses will only be supported where it is demonstrated that both the premises and site are no longer needed and are no longer viable for employment use, supported by appropriate marketing and viability evidence.

Whilst Bentley House is currently vacant, vacancy alone does not demonstrate that the site is no longer needed or viable for employment purposes. The marketing particulars submitted by the appellant describe the building as high-quality office accommodation within an established commercial estate and indicate that the accommodation is available either as a whole or on a floor-by-floor basis. The details also refer to various uses being considered subject to planning permission.

The Council does not consider that the submitted evidence demonstrates that the premises are incapable of continued employment use or that reasonable employment prospects no longer exist.

Rather, the marketing information indicates that the building remains suitable for office occupation and capable of accommodating a range of commercial users.

Accordingly, the Council considers that the proposed modifications to Strategic Policy 30 reinforce the emerging policy position that existing employment premises should be retained unless robust evidence demonstrates that they are no longer needed and are no longer viable for employment use. The modifications therefore support, rather than diminish, the policy objective of safeguarding employment land and premises.

While the appellant has submitted evidence that Bentley House has been marketed since at least July 2020, the marketing particulars consistently describe the premises as high quality office accommodation within an established commercial estate and available in flexible configurations. The Council notes that the later marketing particulars indicate that alternative uses would be considered subject to planning permission. The Council's position remains that the emerging modifications do not alter the requirement for robust evidence to demonstrate that an employment site or premises is no longer needed and no longer viable for employment use before alternative uses are supported.

Overall, the Council considers that the suggested Main Modifications to Strategic Policy 30 reinforce the policy's protection of existing employment sites and premises and therefore do not materially alter the Council's position in relation to the appeal proposal.

Kind Regards,

Daniel Holmes

Senior Planning Officer

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From: East 2 <east2@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>
Sent: 11 August 2026 15:16
To: matt.smith@dm-planning.co.uk; Planning <planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Subject: Appeal 6007051 (LPA Ref: DC/26/0024) - Bentley House, North Heath Lane Industrial Estate, North Heath Lane, Horsham, RH12 5QE - Comments Requested

Good afternoon,

The Inspector requests the views of both parties on the relevance of the proposed alterations to Strategic Policy 30 outlined in the 'Horsham District Council Schedule of Suggested Main Modifications to the Submission Local Plan 2023- 2040' to appeal 6007051. Please send any comments to me by 14th August and cc in the LPA/Agent into your response.

This email does not prejudice the outcome of the appeal.

Kind regards,

Gemma



Gemma Carey (She/Her)
Case Officer, East 2
Planning Inspectorate
www.gov.uk/pins

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