

HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
LOCATION:	Mowbray Employment Park Horsham West Sussex
DESCRIPTION:	Outline planning application (all matters reserved) to provide an Employment Park comprising flexible commercial, industrial and logistics uses (Use Classes E(g), B2, B8), healthcare (Class E(e) including pharmacy) and commercial leisure.
REFERENCE:	DC/26/1240
RECOMMENDATION:	Advice / No Objection / Objection / More Information / Modification / Refusal
SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION: Enterprising Horsham strongly supports the principle of the proposed employment development. The proposal represents an important opportunity to increase the supply and diversity of employment floorspace within Horsham District, create skilled local employment and provide accommodation capable of supporting businesses at different stages of their development. Of particular importance to the Council is the opportunity presented by this site to facilitate the delivery of a dedicated Enterprise Centre, providing flexible, managed workspace for start-ups, SMEs and growing businesses. We would therefore strongly encourage this requirement to be considered as part of the emerging masterplan and subsequent reserved matters.	

MAIN COMMENTS:

The provision of new E(g) and B-class employment floorspace is strongly welcomed. Horsham District needs to continue developing a diverse employment base alongside its growing population, enabling more residents to access good-quality employment locally and supporting the creation and retention of skilled jobs.

It is equally important, however, that the development provides a **genuine range of employment accommodation** rather than simply delivering larger conventional commercial, industrial or logistics units. The economic value of the site will be strengthened considerably if it provides opportunities for start-ups, microbusinesses, SMEs and businesses seeking grow-on space, alongside accommodation for larger occupiers.

This is particularly relevant because Horsham District Council has commissioned detailed feasibility work into the development of a **Horsham Enterprise Centre**. That work identified an under-provision of flexible workspace within the District and developed a model for a high-quality managed business environment combining offices, studios and light industrial/workshop accommodation.

The indicative model emerging from that work comprises approximately **3,075m² gross floorspace, around 2,192m² of lettable accommodation and approximately 80 business units**, accommodating a mixture of offices, studios and workshops. It would potentially support around **240 employees** and require a site of approximately **1.3 acres**, subject to detailed design and site configuration.

Crucially, the feasibility work identifies the securing of a suitable site as the number-one critical success factor in progressing an Enterprise Centre. The Mowbray Employment Park represents a significant opportunity to address that requirement as part of a much wider employment development.

Enterprising Horsham would therefore wish to see **specific provision made within the masterplanning of the site for an Enterprise Centre or equivalent managed workspace facility**, rather than relying solely upon the general availability of commercial floorspace elsewhere within the development. We would welcome early engagement with the applicant/developer to explore how an appropriately located and sized plot could be identified and safeguarded for this purpose and how its delivery could be incorporated into the phasing of the wider employment park.

The Council's feasibility work envisages considerably more than simply a collection of small offices. The proposed model combines flexible office, studio and workshop accommodation with meeting rooms, networking and breakout space and facilities through which business support, collaboration and networking can be delivered. This type of managed environment would complement the wider employment park by providing an **enterprise pipeline**: enabling businesses to start and establish themselves within the Enterprise Centre before potentially progressing into larger premises elsewhere on the employment park or within Horsham District.

We would therefore encourage the overall development to provide a strong **business ecosystem**, with appropriate digital infrastructure, sustainable transport connections, high-quality public realm and opportunities for interaction between businesses. The Enterprise Centre feasibility study envisages high-speed digital connectivity, flexible communal and networking space and high environmental standards as integral elements of such a facility.

Given the scale and strategic importance of the development, we would also welcome continued engagement with Enterprising Horsham regarding opportunities for **local employment and skills, business support, inward investment and local supply-chain participation** as the scheme progresses.

Subject to Development Management's consideration of the relevant planning policies and other material considerations, Enterprising Horsham therefore **strongly supports the employment principle of the application and would particularly welcome measures that secure the opportunity for a dedicated Enterprise Centre within the development.**

"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 (Economic Development)
DATE:	15.09.26