

From: Rob.Leet <Rob.Leet@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 10 September 2026 15:29:40 UTC+01:00
To: "Sam.Whitehouse" <Sam.Whitehouse@horsham.gov.uk>
Subject: DC/26/0826 - Toat Cafe

Dear Sam

I have reviewed the Planning Viability Report in relation to this application.

There appears to have been a reasonably extensive marketing exercise in terms of its duration and general exposure. However, I am less convinced that the evidence presented is sufficiently robust to demonstrate that the full range of commercial uses for which the site is allocated have been properly tested.

Although the report acknowledges that the allocation allows for B2, B8 and a broad range of Class E uses, much of the detailed marketing commentary and occupier feedback relates to roadside or destination uses – supermarkets, drive-throughs, petrol filling/EV charging, automotive, leisure etc. The reasons given for those uses not progressing are predominantly the limited local population catchment, traffic flows and inability to secure an anchor occupier. Those factors are clearly relevant to retail/roadside uses, but are considerably less relevant to industrial, storage/distribution and some other employment uses.

The report states that no interest was received from industrial, warehouse or logistics developers, but there appears to be limited evidence demonstrating the extent to which these sectors were specifically and proactively tested, which operators/developers were approached, what form and scale of development was considered, and what feedback was received. I think this is important before concluding that there is "no realistic prospect" of viable commercial development across the site.

The site's characteristics may also warrant further consideration in this respect. It is a reasonably substantial 6.5-acre site with direct access/frontage to the A29 and potentially fewer operational constraints than some more urban employment locations. In particular, it would be useful to understand whether its potential suitability for uses requiring extended or 24-hour operation has been explored with B2/B8/logistics occupiers.

I would therefore be reluctant, on the evidence currently provided, to conclude that the marketing exercise definitively demonstrates that the site is no longer needed or viable for employment use. I would suggest seeking further evidence specifically addressing demand for Class E employment, B2 and B8 uses, including details of the occupiers/developers approached, their responses and the reasons why those forms of development are considered unviable at this location.

Kind regards

Rob

Rob Leet

Head of Parking and Enterprise

Telephone: [01403 215167](tel:01403215167) | [07919 143517](tel:07919143517)

Email: Rob.Lleet@horsham.gov.uk



Horsham District Council, Alberty House, Springfield Road, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 2GB

Telephone: 01403 215100 (calls may be recorded) www.horsham.gov.uk Chief Executive: Jane Eaton