



Horsham
District
Council

HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
LOCATION:	Thakeham Mushrooms Storrington Road Thakeham Pulborough
DESCRIPTION:	Demolition of existing buildings and the redevelopment of the site to provide 150 dwellings, including affordable housing, land for the community land trust, works to public right of way and associated landscaping, open space and infrastructure.
REFERENCE:	DC/26/0266 (updated)
RECOMMENDATION:	Advice / No Objection_/ <u>Objection</u> / More Information / Modification / Refusal
SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION: Enterprising Horsham (Economic Development) do not support this application.	

MAIN COMMENTS:

The Enterprise Team has reviewed the amended proposal and associated Planning Statement Addendum.

The amendments do not materially alter the matters previously raised in the Enterprise (Economic Development) response. The proposal continues to provide for the redevelopment of the site for 150 dwellings, including affordable housing and land for the Community Land Trust, without the provision of replacement commercial or employment floorspace. The Planning Statement Addendum itself confirms that the flexible Use Class E floorspace included within the earlier scheme has been removed.

As set out in our previous consultation response, Enterprise accepted that the marketing exercise undertaken in relation to the existing premises was sufficient to demonstrate that there was no reasonable prospect of their continued commercial occupation in their current form. Accordingly, no objection was raised in principle to the loss of the existing commercial premises.

However, our previous comments also highlighted the limited supply of modern, fit-for-purpose commercial premises within the District and the fact that redevelopment of the site solely for residential purposes would result in the permanent loss of commercial floorspace and its potential to support local employment. We therefore encouraged consideration of opportunities within the scheme to support employment generation, including through replacement commercial floorspace or, where this was not considered viable, alternative measures capable of delivering economic and employment benefits.

The amended submission does not appear to respond to these comments or identify any additional provision intended specifically to address the permanent loss of employment floorspace. We note that the Planning Statement identifies economic benefits arising from construction employment, the long-term maintenance of the development and increased expenditure associated with new residents. While these benefits are acknowledged, they are not equivalent to the retention or replacement of permanent employment-generating floorspace.

It is also noted that, notwithstanding the scale and nature of the redevelopment and the additional population it would introduce, the scheme does not appear to incorporate any complementary commercial provision, such as a small convenience retail unit, café, flexible workspace or other employment-generating use. Whilst Enterprising Horsham recognises that the commercial viability of such uses would need to be demonstrated and does not suggest that any particular use should necessarily be required, their absence further reinforces the concern that the redevelopment of an existing employment site would result in no direct replacement of its employment-generating function.

The Enterprise Team therefore maintains its previous position. Whilst no objection is raised in principle to the loss of the existing commercial premises, it remains disappointing that the opportunity presented by the redevelopment has not been used to incorporate an employment-generating element within the scheme. We would continue to welcome consideration of any feasible measures that could provide opportunities for local employment or enterprise as part of 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:	24.08.26