



North Horsham Parish Council

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Mr J Hawkes
Planning Application Case Officer
Horsham District Council
Parkside
Chart Way
North Street
Horsham
West Sussex
RH12 1RL

14th January 2019

Dear Sir/Madam,

I write on behalf of North Horsham Parish Council in response to outline planning application DC/18/2687 – for the erection of up to 300 dwellings (C3) including the conversion of existing offices (buildings 3 and 36) up to 25,000sqm of employment (B1) floorspaces and provision of 618sqm of flexible commercial/community space (A1, A2, A3, D1(Creche) use classes) within the ground floor of converted building 36. Improvements to existing pedestrian and vehicular accesses from Parsonage Road and Wimblehurst Road, new cycle and pedestrian accesses from Parsonage Road, together with associated parking and landscaping. All matters reserved except for access.

The Parish Council considered this application at their meeting on 10th January 2019 and there was no objection, in principle, to the mixed use for housing and business on the site. In fact, the Parish Council supports the development of the site to provide homes and employment for local residents and in particular the commitment to 35% affordable housing on the site. The Parish Council also supports keeping and converting the locally listed building to use for residential purposes with some associated retail activity.

Parish Councillors have read with interest, comments submitted from other local organisations and residents and agrees that there is merit in some of the arguments that have been raised.

Access to the site

The Parish Council considers that there has not been sufficient assessment on the impact of additional vehicles on the road systems around the site, or how this impacts the wider area of Horsham. For example, it was disappointing to note that the junction of Richmond Road and Wimblehurst Road had not been reviewed in the Transport Assessment, as traffic, including buses, turning out of that junction are hampered by poor sightlines. Traffic turning into the junction can be restricted if there are cars waiting to turn out, as the junction is relatively narrow. As this is one of the major pedestrian access from the north of Horsham to Collyer's sixth form college, there is the additional hazard of those on foot crossing the road. The difficulty of access to and from Richmond Road is likely to be exacerbated by additional vehicle movements along Wimblehurst Road.

The access through the old gateway onto the site to and from Wimblehurst Road is marked as a primary route for the development, but the Parish Council considers that the impact of an access so close to the North Heath Lane/ Wimblehurst Road/ Parsonage Road junction (referred to as Junction C in the planning documents) would be detrimental to the flow of traffic in the area and pose a danger to vehicles turning from Parsonage Road to travel along Wimblehurst Road and to vehicles turning from the new development to travel north. As indicated previously, this is also a major pedestrian route between the northern side of Horsham and Collyer's sixth form college.

The junction of North Heath Lane and Blenheim Road has also been omitted from the Transport Assessment for reasons that have not been made clear. Blenheim Road leads to a significantly wider road network and its close proximity to Junction C will inevitably lead to issues when vehicles are trying to exit onto North Heath Lane, especially when they are turning right to go towards Wimblehurst Road. Similarly, vehicles turning into Blenheim Road will potentially hold up traffic travelling towards Junction C. There are other residential side roads between Junction C and Coltsfoot Drive that lead onto North Heath Lane and that will similarly be impacted by the installation of traffic lights at Junction C. Chennells Way and Heath Way lead to a wider road network. Gorse End, Allcard Close and North Heath Close have fewer houses. All the side roads leading onto North Heath Lane are relatively close together and all have relatively restricted sight lines. The ability to exit and enter these roads safely will be significantly affected by increased traffic that results from the proposed development.

Additional traffic queuing along Wimblehurst Road, North Heath Lane and Parsonage Road is likely to have a damaging effect on air quality from pollutants and the queues will impact on the numerous buses that travel along Wimblehurst Road and then North Heath Lane. With the development north of Horsham, the number of buses could increase. There are currently bus stops very close to Junction C on North Heath Lane. These are currently well used and as they are likely to be the main bus stops for the Horsham Enterprise Park, there will be a larger number of passengers, meaning that the bus will stop for longer. Buses stopping at both bus stops already cause traffic to queue. At peak times when there are more vehicle movements associated with the Parsonage Road development the flow of traffic will be badly affected.

The Transport Assessment has not looked at the potential impact of additional vehicles coming from the large development agreed for the north of the A264, the development on Jackdaw Lane and other significant development around Horsham and the additional strain this will put on the roads leading to and from the Horsham Enterprise Park. Residents will want assurance that there are no unacceptable levels of congestion when all of the significant development in the area has been taken account of.

Car Parking

The Parish Council has serious concerns that the amount of parking on the site will not be adequate and this will lead to displacement in neighbouring residential areas.

Level crossing

The Parish Council supports the installation of full barriers at the level crossing on Parsonage Road to protect those crossing the railway line, especially those on foot, however, the way that it is operated should minimise delays for traffic using Parsonage Road to avoid the build up of traffic and the resulting pollution from emissions.

Pedestrian bridge link

The Parish Council supports the installation of a footbridge over the railway line to link more conveniently to the railway station and the town centre. Making the railway station more accessible may encourage more people who come from outside the area to commute by public transport.

Avenue of trees from Wimblehurst Road.

The Parish Council was pleased to note that the avenue of trees from Wimblehurst Road to the locally listed building are being retained and protected as they add to the character of the area and promote a positive street scene.

Yours sincerely

Pauline Whitehead BA(Hons) FSLCC
Clerk to the Council