

**Examination of the
Horsham Local Plan 2023-2040
Hearing Statement in Respect of
Matter 9 issue 2 HA 10 HOR 2 g): Land at Mercer Road
Submitted on behalf of:
Riverdale Developments Limited**



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Matter: Sites Allocated for Development in the Plan

Issue 2 – Whether the other sites (settlement site allocations) allocated in the Plan and associated policies are justified, effective, consistent with national policy and positively prepared?

Q6. Is Strategic Policy H10: Horsham Housing Allocations sound?

d) Is criterion g) justified and consistent with national policy?

1. No

2. The draft Horsham Local Plan at Policy H10 HOR2 g) provides no explanatory text for what

“Provide safe crossing of the railway line”

means and what work has already been undertaken on this.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that-

"203. Local planning authorities should consider whether otherwise unacceptable development could be made acceptable through the use of conditions or planning obligations. Planning obligations should only be used where it is not possible to address unacceptable impacts through a planning condition.

204. Planning obligations should only be sought where they meet all of the following tests:

necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms directly related to the development; and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development."

These same tests are also set out in CIL Regulations 122 and 123.

Requirement g) of the draft policy suggests that the site at Mercer Road should provide safe crossing of the railway line in isolation and in turn that the development would only be acceptable in planning terms if this was provided.

The current level crossing at the station is closed to vehicles but there is a pedestrian and cycle crossing which has a traffic light system for when it is safe to cross. The level crossing provides access to both platforms from both sides of the crossing with ramped access available to the platforms. There is also a subway located on the station platforms which provides access to both platforms from both sides of the station.

It is accepted that a development of 300 dwellings in close proximity to the station will lead to an increase in people using the station, as will the provision of a new car park to serve the station. However, the current situation at the station should be recognised, as should any

other proposed development in the vicinity of Warnham Station which could also lead to increased usage of the station, such as the increase in the number of dwellings at the development at Land North of Horsham.

The draft Horsham plan states in paragraphs 10.24 and 10.25 that -

“As development at Land North of Horsham is still within the early stages of construction, it is proposed that the Horsham District Planning Framework policies relating to Land North of Horsham (SD1 to SD9 inclusive) are saved over the period of this Plan to allow for the consideration of reserved matter applications. Policy SD1 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (November 2015) makes provision for at least 2,500 homes. To date some 2,750 homes have outline planning permission.

Since the initial allocation of land to the north of Horsham, the site promoters have reviewed the land within their control and the extent to which effective use of a greenfield site can be made. Having reviewed these submissions, the Council is of the view that there is the potential to accommodate additional development through a degree of densification of the scheme. Overall, it is considered that there is potential for an additional 500 homes, which would include Land at Cuckmere Farm. Provision for these additional 500 homes is therefore set out in Policy 37 below for completeness.”

The made Warnham Neighbourhood Development Plan (June 2019) has the following policy-

“POLICY W8: Public car parking

1. Proposals to provide car parking to serve users of Warnham Station, as shown in Figure 7.3 and on the Policies Map 1, with vehicular access provided from Station Road and landscape mitigation measures as appropriate will be strongly supported.”

- **Warnham Station** – access to the station for pedestrians is difficult because it is located about 1.5 km from the village centre and across the busy A24, with no safe crossing point. The majority of rail users therefore need to arrive by car but parking is very limited.
- **Football pitch** – the pitch is north of Warnham School and remote from public highways. The development of the site allocated in Policy W6 provides accessibility to a public highway and facilitates the provision of car parking adjacent to the football pitch.

7.7 There is agricultural land conveniently located close to Warnham Station which could provide car parking subject to a feasibility study including flood risk and appropriate access and landscaping proposals. The land owner is amenable to considering proposals to lease the land for this purpose. Figure 7.3 illustrates how might be located and accessed. The site is also shown on Policy Map 1.

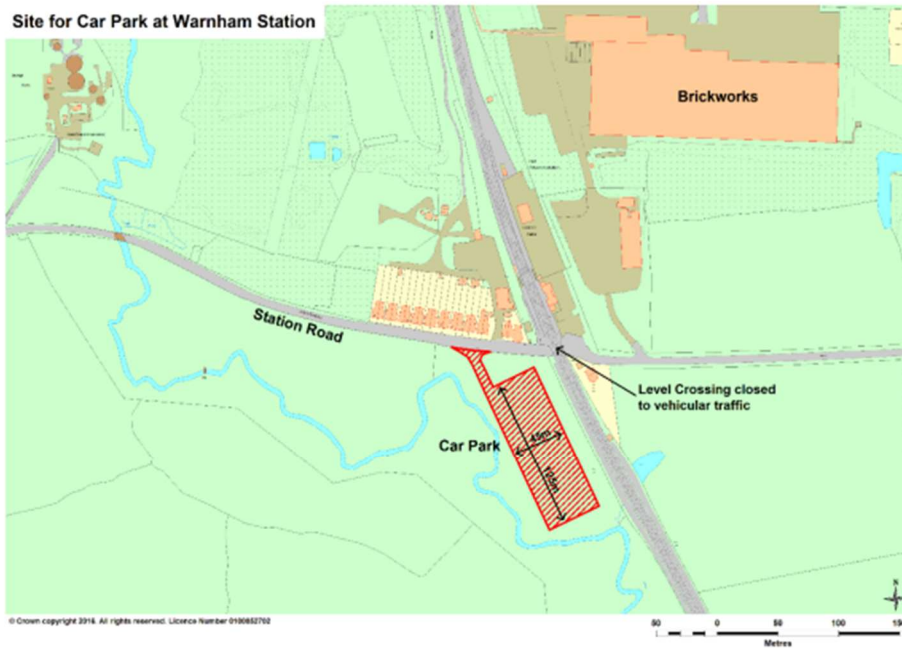


Figure 7.3: Broad location for proposed use of land to create parking at Warnham Station

There should in the first instance be a proper review and investigation of the crossing requirement at Warnham Station as a result of new development in the vicinity of the station. If a review concludes that a new crossing is required, then the Mercer Road allocation along with the other developments in the vicinity of the station which will lead to an increase in users should all be liable for the cost of a safe crossing.

The allocation HOR2 should not be expected to fund the entire cost of any new railway crossing at Warnham station.

Part g) of the policy HA 10 HOR 2 should be reworded to state –

g) Provide no less than 50 parking spaces for Warnham Railway Station and following a full review of the current crossing facilities at Warnham Station, any improvements required to provide safe crossing of the railway line should be proportionately funded by the development along with other appropriate development within the vicinity of Warnham station.