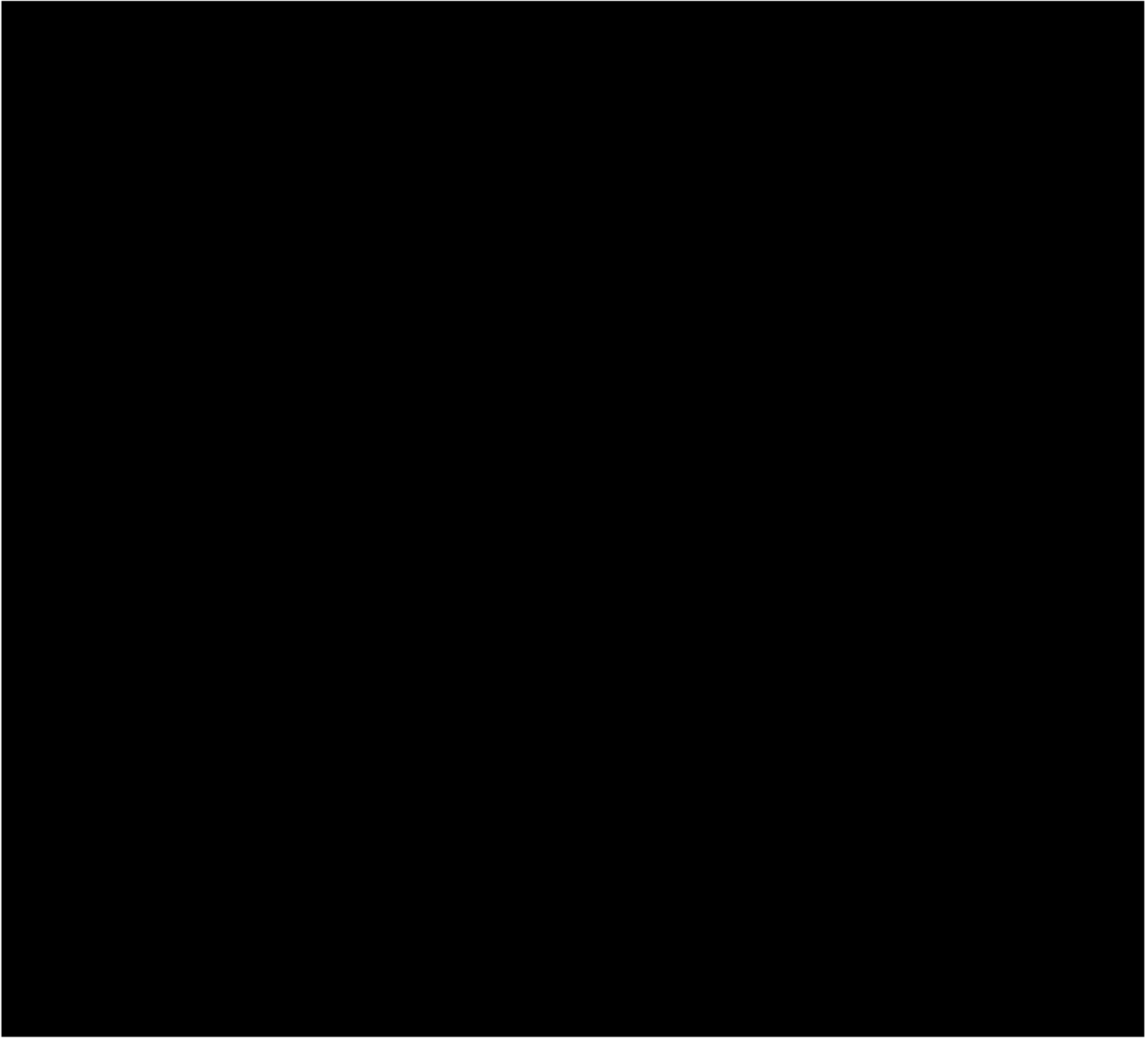




From: Miriam Nicholls <Miriam.Nicholls@arun.gov.uk>

Sent: 31 March 2022 13:28

To: Michael Eastham <Michael.Eastham@arun.gov.uk>

Cc: Denise Vine <Denise.Vine@arun.gov.uk>

Subject: LU/417/21/OUT.

Hello Michael

The response from Economic Development is below.

Regards

Miriam

Economic Development Object to this application.

The adopted Arun Economic Strategy 2020 – 2-25 states

“ ... Our growing business population that has increased by 15% in five years shows that there is strong demand for employment space in Arun. We have a good mix of affordable premises and room to develop more. Our aim is to increase local employment opportunities to redress the balance between residential development and jobs for local people. We want new residential development matched by employment space to ensure there are new local employment opportunities for local people.”

The 2021 Coastal West Sussex Partnership White Paper says ...

“ Finding more space for businesses which are growing in the Coastal West Sussex region, and for businesses looking to move here, is an ongoing challenge. Local Authorities and partners across the Coastal West Sussex region are always looking for ways to increase and develop new commercial space; encouraging existing businesses to stay and grow whilst attracting new businesses to move to the area. The pandemic has made people rethink their work-life balance, and realise the benefits of living and working locally. Reducing the need for long commutes has obvious environmental and well-being advantages so we need to make sure there is the space for companies to operate.

Here we talk to David Martin, Partner and Head of Sussex Coast at national independent property advisors SHW, to discover the current picture for commercial space.

What are the specific challenges in Coastal West Sussex for commercial space?

“What we are short of is land for development, especially in the industrial sector which often heads to Crawley instead. So, it’s good to see councils are now focusing on solving that issue. “Rents here are not sufficient to justify building new premises without an end user in place, but the flip side is that rents are far more affordable than in London or Brighton, and so businesses are taking up space here. The biggest recently was in Worthing where the Inland Revenue took 80,000 sq. ft. It’s a pre-let situation but nevertheless shows confidence in the region.”

What would you like decision makers to do?

“We need to identify sites where business can come and grow. We need greenfield sites where a company can take 50,000 sq. ft – but know if they need 100,000 sq. ft in future it’s possible.

“Rolls Royce was probably the last big company to move into our region and they started off with 300,000 sq. ft in Chichester and then built another 100,000 sq.ft on top in the space of three years.”

Has the commercial property industry been impacted negatively by the pandemic?

“It’s been very tough for retail but the flip side is that a lot of retailers have focused on internet sales and been successful – and so they need bigger premises as a result.”

It is interesting to note that the remaining land at Salt Box in Bognor Regis has recently changed hands, is being built out with commercial units on a speculative basis and significant numbers of enquiries are already being received. In addition Rolls Royce has recently expanded its operation at Bognor Regis with an extension to its existing premises.

The Economic Development Team is aware that there is a lower demand for office space in Arun and that the pandemic has further affected that. However, what the pandemic has also brought forward is entrepreneurs who started small businesses as a result of being furloughed or made redundant. Many of these started at home, have now outgrown that space and are looking for small units in which to continue to grow their business. We are currently unable to satisfy those requirements.

The Economic Development Team would be willing to discuss alternatives to office development on the land allocated for commercial use but we object strongly to this current application.

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