



Is Bohunt school design left wanting?

A start has now been made on the North of Horsham project, with the enabling works, comprising removal of certain hedgerows complete, allowing the commencement of Infrastructure works for the initial phase. This will include construction of the main access to the development from the A264. It will be interesting to see how Legal & General propose to maintain access to Rusper, without affecting traffic flow, as the road to Rusper is used by many commuters! In tandem with these infrastructure works will be the construction of the Bohunt School, which will be sited directly to the East of the main access point to the development. This is a landmark site for the school and therefore the building should be pleasing in appearance, of a high quality and not merely functional, as it will showcase the entire development.

However, an inspection of the initial planning submission for Bohunt School - Planning Application DC/19/1730 - indicates an uninspiring building of poor design quality and which is also somewhat drab in appearance. The application



includes a Design and Access Statement, in which the design team for Bohunt School promote their credentials. In this promotion, images of schools, used as examples have more colour, life and interest than the school which has been proposed for North of Horsham. We should encourage the applicant to aim for better and more interesting designs, and

produce a building where appearance is not immaterial but one of which Horsham can be proud. Education is something which should be enjoyed, where laughter and learning mix with colours and design and the buildings should reflect these aspirations. Combining these qualities will bring life to the building and the environment. The addition of colour to the design can serve to lift the buildings, but by and large this design has excluded any such proposals. Should the reader venture in the direction of Worthing, the newly constructed Northbrook College is a good example in the use of colour, which has served to lift and bring interest to the building.

Layout options are included in the Design Statement, but have shortcomings. Options indicate the sports hall close to the roundabout, which is as per the submitted design. Outdoor areas are proposed to the North of the school, but they will be in the shadow of the buildings and as a result could be heavily shaded and damp. There is also a large forecourt, which will probably be under-utilised. We believe that consideration should be given to reviewing the building layout,

to enable outdoor areas to be located on the South side of the school, where they would undoubtedly benefit from the light and sunny conditions. Internally much is made of the provision of a 'Shared Learning Street', but submitted details fall far short of this statement. The 'street' is little more than a glorified corridor, with no features such as double height ceilings, balconies, links to facilities and the addition of colour. Many students will arrive by car or bus, but the proposed parking facilities appear woefully inadequate, and will undoubtedly be overwhelmed, as they are at Forest and Millais schools.

Planners, please use your best endeavours when liaising with the design team, to ensure Bohunt School is one of which Horsham can be proud.

The Horsham Society is concerned about the past, present and future of the town. It seeks to promote good planning and design for the built environment and open spaces. Membership of the Horsham Society is open to anyone who shares these concerns. For more information, visit the website www.horshamsociety.org or phone 01403 259038.