

Contact: **Steve Sawyer (Executive Director)**
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Date: **05 February 2021**



Henry Smith MP
House of Commons,
Westminster
London SW1A 0AA

Dear Henry

Concern Over New Permitted Development Rights (England)

On behalf of the Manor Royal Business Improvement District (BID), I am writing to you to express concern about the proposed deregulation of planning ([Supporting Housing Delivery and Public Space Infrastructure](#)) and to let you know of our response to the consultation carried out by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (attached separately).

In summary, it is the view of the Manor Royal BID that the changes proposed by Government would have a detrimental impact on the function and perception of Manor Royal as an economic centre and business park. It is also our view that the Government has given poor regard to the application of permitted development rights to places like Manor Royal and the negative impact allowing unmanaged and unplanned conversions of commercial buildings to residential would have and that a more nuanced approach is required to protect key employment locations if they are to be retained and protected as places of high-quality employment and commerce.

While we understand the intent of these changes is to create more housing and more flexibility, we are concerned of the unintended consequences on places like Manor Royal should these permitted development rights come into effect, particularly given that the policy would allow for the conversion of a wide range of different building types regardless of their size, geographic location or unique context.

We do not doubt that we need more housing across the country. More residents brings a critical mass that can support our businesses. However, if this influx of new residents is at the expense of those very same businesses then we could lose our key employment sites, and with it, the assets that bring the services and jobs that residents need.

We urge you to take a look at the proposals and understand what the potential impact would be for the Manor Royal Business District and work with the government to find a better way to achieve this. We do not doubt that more housing in town centres and high streets can bring benefits if done well, and during a time of great change, landlords need some flexibility. However, this approach is a blunt instrument that puts many businesses and places hard hit by the pandemic, at risk.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Trevor Williams', with a small dot to the right.

Trevor Williams
Chair, Manor Royal Business District Ltd

Cc Cllr Peter Lamb, Leader of Crawley Borough Council