

Arun House  
Hurst Road  
Horsham  
West Sussex  
RH12 2DN

19<sup>th</sup> January 2016

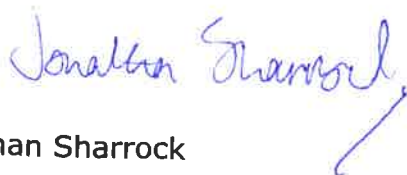
Mrs Frances Rutter  
Epsom & Ewell Borough Council  
Town Hall  
The Parade  
Epsom  
Surrey  
KT18 5BY

Dear Frances,

Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership represents more than 85,000 businesses and works closely with local authorities to achieve our priority of creating 100,000 new jobs by 2035. I have been monitoring the impact of the changes to the permitted development regime that allow the change of use of offices to residential uses across the Coast to Capital area. Our evidence demonstrates that over 500,000 sq ft of viable office space has already been lost in the Crawley area alone. We believe that this is having an adverse impact upon business growth and job creation. The loss of office space in Town Centre locations such as in Epsom have a far wider impact upon the economic vitality and viability of their retail offer. This has the potential to undermine the work we are undertaking in partnership with local authorities. In particular, there is a real risk that the Local Growth Fund infrastructure investment being made in the Coast to Capital's town centres will unravel.

The LEP has underlined the damage being done to the viability of local business to the Government. We are actively seeking changes to the permitted development regime to address our concerns – so that occupied and viable offices are exempted. In the absence of such amendments to the permitted development regime we positively endorse and support the use of Article 4 Directions to manage the retention of occupied and viable office buildings – particularly those located in highly sustainable town centre location. On that basis we support the approach being taken by Epsom & Ewell Borough Council.

Yours sincerely



Jonathan Sharrock

Chief Executive

Coast to Capital LEP