



JANUARY
2025

Appendix A: Review of Existing Employment Areas & Extant Allocations

Final Report

Iceni Projects Limited on behalf of
Harborough District Council

January 2025

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ICENI PROJECTS
LIMITED ON BEHALF
OF HARBOROUGH
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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FINAL REPORT

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Appendices

A1. Site Assessment Proforma

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Harborough District Council has commissioned Icen Projects Limited to prepare local housing and employment land evidence. This includes reviewing the employment land portfolio in the District, both existing employment sites and extant allocations, to feed into the review of the Local Plan. This is the focus of this Appendix.
- 1.2 The Council's existing Local Plan was adopted in 2019. It allocates sites for employment development and sets out policies regarding existing employment sites in the District. The Council is now in the process of reviewing the Plan which – when adopted – will replace the existing Local Plan. To inform this it needs to have an up-to-date evidence base which addresses the need for employment development, the land available to meet these needs, but also considers the quality and appropriateness of existing employment sites within the District. This Appendix responds to these objectives.
- 1.3 This report thus reviews designated employment areas in the District, together with employment allocations which are undeveloped or partially developed, to draw site-specific findings which can inform policies related to employment sites within the Local Plan and accurately quantify the existing employment land supply. This includes appraising site boundaries and the appropriate uses. The assessment considers:
- the extent to which designated employment sites are 'fit for purpose' in meeting modern business needs, or are in need of investment;
 - the potential contribution which designated employment sites could make to meeting the identified needs, including the potential for use of vacant land/floorspace within them or intensification of these sites, as appropriate;
 - qualitative issues regarding the portfolio of employment land within different areas including gaps in the supply to meet different market segments;

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- whether employment allocations which are undeveloped or partially developed should be retained, and whether policies regarding these sites need to be adjusted;
 - How sites should be treated in policy terms including reviewing site boundaries where appropriate, and advising on appropriate uses.

1.4 The availability of suitable land for strategic B8 development is also material to the ultimate conclusions on employment land provision in the District. This is considered in the Strategic B8 Needs Sensitivity Analysis report.

1.5 This report is informed by site visits to employment sites in the District undertaken by Icen staff in Spring 2024; engagement with local commercial agents¹ and, where appropriate, developers bringing forward key extant allocations; and a review of the pattern of supply and losses, as per the PPG. The site assessment proforma is included in Appendix A1.

1.6 Maps have been included for each site. These show the original site boundaries (as per the current Local Plan policies map) and, where relevant, proposed amendments to site boundaries or recommended new site boundaries where a site did not previously have a designation. Renewal and intensification opportunities and potentially developable areas of land have also been identified by Icen on the maps. The legend below sets out the map layers.

Figure 1.1 Map legend



1.7

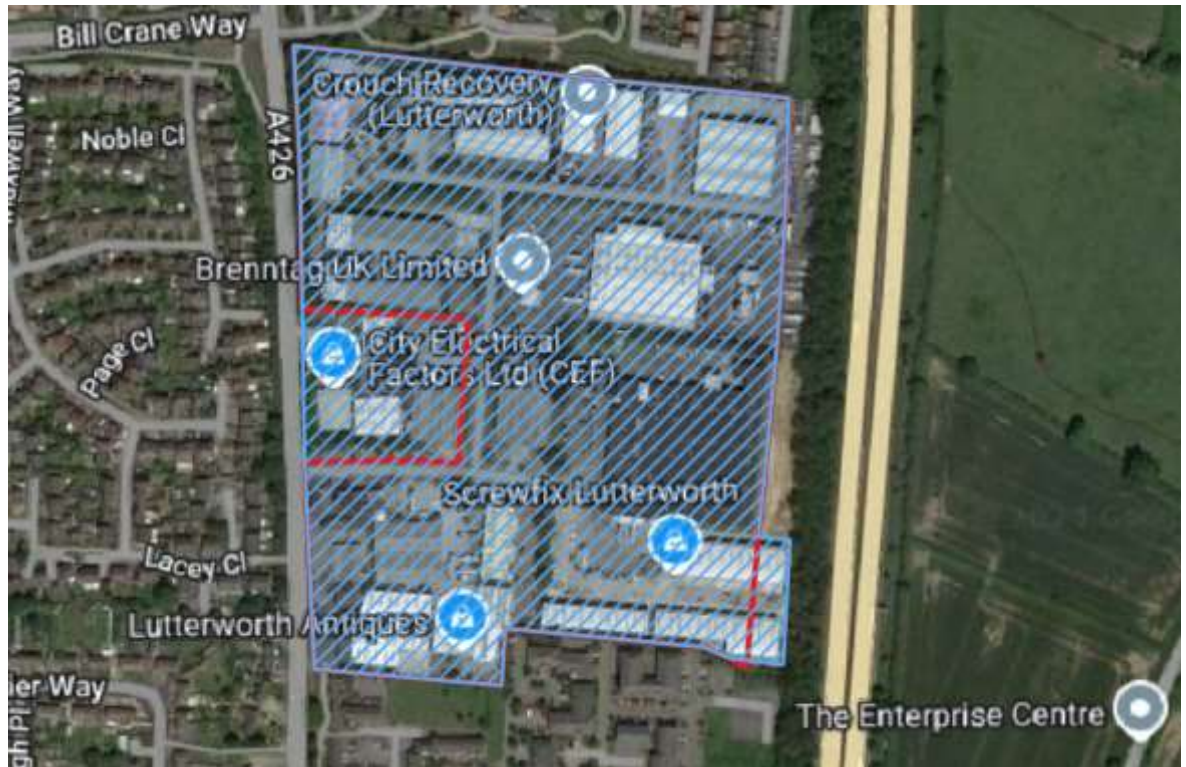
¹ Budworth Hardcastle, Innes England, Andrew & Ashwell, ABP Property Consultants, Mather Jamie

2. Lutterworth

- 2.1 This section considers and appraises existing employment land provision at Lutterworth. It considers existing employment provision within the existing settlement and around Magna Park. The separate Strategic B8 Needs Sensitivity Analysis report considers employment land provision at Magna Park.
- 2.2 Lutterworth is an attractive location for commercial development because of its accessibility to the M1 motorway, with M1 Junction 20 sitting to the south-eastern side of the Town. With a population of c. 10,800 persons (2021) it is however a notably smaller settlement than Market Harborough.
- 2.3 Existing employment land provision at Lutterworth is focused between the A426 and the M1, on the northern side of the Town. In addition, Magna Park – which is Europe’s largest distribution park – is located to the east of the settlement on the A5.
- 2.4 Lutterworth has a strong supply of industrial premises which see low vacancy rates. It is notable that the supply of new industrial premises (E(g)(iii)/B2/non-strategic B8) at Lutterworth has been more restricted than other towns and villages. The majority of stock is of average quality and aging.
- 2.5 New commercial development is allocated as part of the development of the East of Lutterworth Strategic Development Area, a major urban extension to the town on the eastern side of the M1. Whilst this has planning consent, it has yet to come forwards and has resulted in some current constraints on employment land availability in Lutterworth.
- 2.6 Lutterworth’s office provision is more limited, with the majority of stock comprising small re-purposed residential buildings in the town centre. Demand is also more limited in Lutterworth, with poorer transport connections in comparison to Market Harborough which has a train station connected to the Midland Main Line. It is also a smaller settlement with a different demographic profile; and therefore we would expect development at Lutterworth to be more focused on industrial uses.

Existing Key Employment Areas (KEAs)

Bilton Way Industrial Estate, Lutterworth



- 2.7 A mixed-use industrial estate, where the existing site area covers c. 10.1 ha, which includes a range of B class uses and businesses of varying sizes, including a number of larger businesses. The site is located off the A426 in Lutterworth and is adjacent to residential areas to the north and west, the M1 to the east and further employment sites to the south.
- 2.8 Adjoining the site is further employment development along Oakberry Road which includes the Royal Mail delivery office, City Electrical Factors and other employment development.
- 2.9 Environmental quality is average and the age of buildings varies, with some signs of investment such as the recently developed (2021) Tungsten Park. Parking and circulation on-site are generally adequate.

2.10 Tungsten Park is located towards the southeastern corner of the wider estate and consists of thirteen high-quality units ranging from approximately 230 sqm to 370 sqm. The site provides modern light industrial and trade counter space focused on SME businesses with occupiers including Screwfix, ScrewCaps UK and MED Engineering. The site as a whole is generally well occupied although the intensity of activity varies. Key occupiers include Brenntag, Crouch recovery and Pukka Pads. There is an extant consent for the extension of Unit A2, Bilton Way (B8 development) (23/00264/FUL) together with a pending application for redevelopment of the large PAL International warehouse on Bilton Way (24/00607/FUL). There is no evident immediate further development potential.

Recommendation: The site is well located and occupied with evidence of planning applications coming forwards for employment redevelopment. The site should continue to be classified as a Key Employment Area (KEA) to safeguard it for employment uses (Class E(g), B2, non-strategic B8). The site boundary should be amended to include the Oakberry Road area and the full extent of the Tungsten Park development within this KEA. This increases the site area to 11.2 ha.

Cosford Business Park, Central Park, Lutterworth



- 2.11 A generally good quality business park, c. 0.5 ha in size, located in Lutterworth comprising light industrial starter units occupied by SMEs. Units are steel frame units providing industrial and office accommodation. They were built in the 2010s and are more modern in comparison to most of the other industrial stock in the vicinity along the A426.
- 2.12 The site is located off the A426 Leicester Road and has sufficient car parking in front of each unit. The site lies north of C&V Business Park and south of Midland Court Business Park. There are residential uses to the west of the site and to the north at Drage Close.
- 2.13 Two units appeared to be vacant at the time of the site assessments, equating to less than 10% of total stock. There is no evident further development potential on the site.

Recommendation: The site should be retained as a Key Employment Area as the stock is of good quality and is located within a wider area of employment. It is suitable for E(g) uses.

Midland Court Business Park, Central Park, Lutterworth



- 2.14 A reasonably attractive office park (c. 1.6 ha) comprising two storey office premises built in the 2000s. Whilst car parking is adequate, environmental quality around the site is declining.
- 2.15 Activity levels at the time of the site assessments were average, with occupiers such as Ultimate Finance and Nationwide Platforms Head Office. Unit 6 appeared vacant (but does not appear to be actively marketed), Unit 7 is for sale (164 sq.m) and Unit 16-17 is being actively marketed online (365 sq.m).
- 2.16 Land located to the east of the site had consent as part of the original scheme and may provide potential for a further phase of the development, subject to market demand, however this has not been built out. This is currently outside the KEA boundary and owned by Para Holdings Inc and Fortress Property Services Ltd. It is unlikely that further office development will be viable in the short-term with office demand low post-pandemic and availability rising; together with high build costs at present.

Recommendation: Whilst current office market conditions are impacting on the performance of space at this site, there is limited provision of office buildings/ space elsewhere in Lutterworth and this site therefore plays an important role in providing space for office-based SME business activities. Appropriate to retain it as a Key Employment Site. The Council should consider supporting light industrial units alongside other E(g) uses and amending the site boundary to include the area of land to the east (c. 0.6 ha²) as shown on the image above.

St John's Business Park, off Rugby Road, Lutterworth



² Icenl measured

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- 2.17 A good quality business park, c. 1.4 ha in size, consisting of six 2-3 storey 2000's office buildings located in Lutterworth, south of the town centre.
- 2.18 The site has good access by road, located on the A4304 roundabout with almost immediate access to the M1 J20. There is ample parking provision and electric vehicle charging stations adjoining the site at the Travelodge hotel and adjacent to the site at the Aldi supermarket to the west.
- 2.19 The site is generally well occupied with occupiers such as ATG Airports (airfield lighting specialist), Elmhurst Energy (energy assessment training) and Broomfields Solicitors (legal services). Unit 4 appeared to be the only unit available to let (224 sq.m).

Recommendation: The site should continue to be protected for office-based employment (Class E(g)(i)) as a Key Employment Area. It is one of the key sites with office provision in Lutterworth.

Existing General Employment Areas

Elizabethan Way, off Leicester Road, Lutterworth



- 2.20 This is a relatively small (c. 1 ha), average quality industrial estate with dated stock (likely 1970s). Occupiers include Hammond Automotive (garage/MOT centre), Dudley Associates Ltd (plastic injection moulding) and Lifeplan Products Ltd (Health foods). The site is well-used with no evident vacant units and high levels of activity are evident.
- 2.21 The site is located off the A426 Leicester Road – the main road through Lutterworth – and is adjacent to other industrial uses. Parking is relatively tight, with some evidence of on-street parking. It is adjoined by other employment development. Multiple ownerships make comprehensive redevelopment unlikely.
- 2.22 Elizabethan House at the front of the site is not included within the site boundary but is used for employment purposes with a diverse range of occupiers including Evergreen Curtains and Interiors and Broughton Veterinary Group. Consideration should be given to including it within the employment area.

Recommendation: The Site should remain a General Employment Area (GEA) as it is generally fit for purpose, with no signs of vacancy, but may benefit from investment and renewal. Suitable uses are E(g), B2 and non-strategic B8. The site boundary could be amended to include Elizabethan House on the Leicester Road frontage, increasing the site area to 1.5ha.

Land at Gilmorton Road, Lutterworth



- 2.23 An average quality site, c. 1.6 ha in size, with three occupiers. The southern end of the site is occupied by Premier Foods and EA Printing and comprises relatively dated (1970s) office and warehousing space. The northern end of the site comprises car parking and open storage/truck parking used by Trout Transport Ltd. This area (shaded purple on the above image) is currently in active use but could potentially be intensified as indicated by the purple area on the map.
- 2.24 Parking on-site is reasonably limited but sufficient given current activity levels. The site is close to M1 J20, however access requires travel through the Town Centre and along Gilmorton Road which is a narrow, predominantly residential street. The site is within walking distance of Lutterworth Town Centre.
- 2.25 There is agricultural land to the east of the site, residential to the south and west, and industrial uses (Oaks Industrial Estate) to the north/west.

Recommendation: The site should be retained as a General Employment Area (GEA) as it is generally fit for purpose however it could be upgraded or intensified. It is suitable for E(g), B2 and non-strategic B8 uses.

Mulberry Enterprise Park (Semelab), Coventry Road, Lutterworth



2.26 This is an industrial/logistics site, c. 2.4 ha in size, by Mulberry Developments marketed as Enterprise Park Lutterworth.³ The site is located just off the A4303 between Magna Park Central and Magna Park South, 2.5 miles to the east of M1 Junction 20. Access is from the westbound carriageway only.

2.27 The site includes three existing units. Two central units were previously used by Semelab Limited one of which has since been demolished. The unit on the western boundary (1,395 sq.m) was constructed in the 2000s (01/01727/FUL) and at the time of writing is available to let, as the previous tenant has fallen into administration.

³ https://mulberrycommercialdevelopments.co.uk/mulberry_developments/enterprise-park-lutterworth/

Unit 3 was delivered by Mulberry and completed at the time of the site assessments, and is occupied by Zeiss.

- 2.28 The remaining unit to be delivered – Unit 4 – which is 4,050 sq.m had been marketed on a build to suit basis. We understand from Mulberry that occupiers seeking units of this size want to see units built; and Mulberry have therefore commenced construction. This unit can therefore be expected to be delivered short-term. It offers a 10m height to eaves and a 36m yard depth on a 1.79 ha plot.

Recommendation: It is appropriate to retain this site for E(g), B2 and non-strategic B8 development and upgrade its designation to a Key Employment Area (KEA). It is focused on modern units at a location with good access to the SRN.

Ladywood Works, Leicester Road, Lutterworth



- 2.29 An older industrial estate, c. 3.4 ha in size, comprising a mix of pre-war and 1960s/1970s light industrial units. The site is located off the A426 Leicester Road –

the main road through Lutterworth – and is adjacent to other industrial uses (including Wycliffe Industrial Estate, Oaks Industrial Estate). The M1 is located to the east.

- 2.30 There is underutilisation of space across the site. Activity levels are low and environmental quality is average. The quality of units across the site varies, but quality is particularly poor towards the eastern end (rear of the site), as shaded purple on the plan above, and renewal should be supported, as indicated by the purple area on the map.
- 2.31 The western end (front) of the site is generally better quality and accommodates a mix of uses including a tyre shop, taxi rank and a tanning and beauty salon. H.W Coates occupy the largest unit on the site which is used for warehousing. It is estimated that approx. 5% of the site is being used for non E(g)/B class uses.
- 2.32 Throughout the site, car parking and circulation are not clearly defined however this is adequate for existing users and activity levels.
- 2.33 One light industrial unit towards the front of the site appears to be vacant (Unit 5) and Unit 2 towards the rear of the site also appears to potentially be vacant.
- 2.34 The site appears to be in a single ownership (HW Coates Ltd) which may help to facilitate investment and regeneration.
- 2.35 Recommendation: The site should remain a General Employment Area (GEA) as it supports a range of businesses, and provides affordable space, but would benefit from investment and renewal. Renewal of the older stock, particularly towards the rear of the site (Eastern portion) should be supported. The flexibility provided by Policy BE3 around supporting broader employment-generating uses, alongside E(g), B2 and non-strategic B8, is particularly important in encouraging investment and regeneration.**

Wycliffe Industrial Estate, Leicester Road, Lutterworth



- 2.36 This is a well-occupied and actively used industrial site with no evident vacancy at the time of the site assessments. The site is c. 1.7 ha in size and units on-site mostly date back to the 1980s and 1990s. Occupiers include Trade Glass UK (glass merchant), ESCATEC Mechatronics Ltd (electronics manufacturer) and Lester Controls (elevator manufacturer).
- 2.37 The site is located off the A426 Leicester Road – the main road through Lutterworth – and is adjacent to other industrial uses (including Oaks Industrial Estate, Ladywood Works). It is an attractive location and well occupied. There is sufficient car parking in front of the units.

Recommendation: The site should remain a General Employment Area (GEA) as it is generally fit for purpose, with no signs of vacancy, but may benefit from renewal over time. E(g), B2 and non-strategic B8 uses are suitable.

Oaks Industrial Estate, Lutterworth



- 2.38 A relatively poor-quality, c. 2.3 ha industrial estate located in Lutterworth, accessed via Gilmorton Road. There is relatively low intensity of activity on-site with one key occupier (Truline, transport and delivery logistics). The site is in single ownership (HW Coates).
- 2.39 The central industrial units appear older (pre-war) and seem to be vacant with no activity at the time of assessment. The smaller unit towards the front of the site (southern end) also appears to be vacant. These currently vacant units occupy approx. 1.1 ha of the area of the GEA as shaded purple on the plan above, which provide some potential for intensification of existing activities. This site is in single ownership and the land is therefore not available for wider employment development.
- 2.40 There is adequate parking and circulation around the site at present given the relatively low levels of activity. The site is close to M1 J20, however access requires

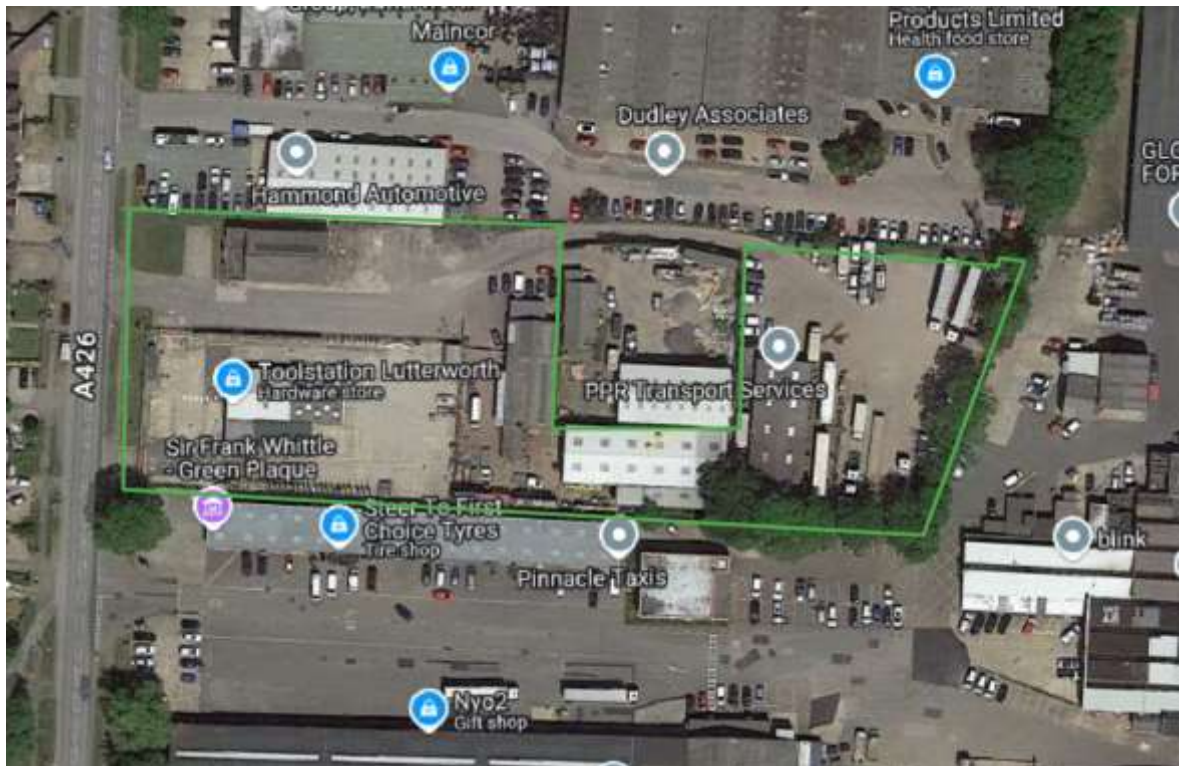
travel through the Town Centre and along Gilmorton Road which is a narrow, predominantly residential street. The site is within walking distance to Lutterworth Town Centre.

- 2.41 The site is adjacent to other industrial uses (including Ladywood Works and Wycliffe Industrial Estate). The M1 lies to the east of the site beyond a wooded area. There are residential areas to the south of the site and one industrial unit occupied by CosyFloor which is not included within the site boundary.

Recommendation: The site should be retained as a General Employment Area, not least as it lies adjacent to other employment uses and adjoins the M1 and therefore is not particularly suitable for other uses such as residential. The flexibility provided by Policy BE3 around supporting broader employment-generating uses, alongside E(g), B2 and non-strategic B8, is particularly important in encouraging investment and regeneration.

Proposed GEAs/KEAs

Off Leicester Road (Lutterworth Coaches/Travis Perkins area), Lutterworth



- 2.42 This c. 1.0 ha site is located off the A426 Leicester Road in Lutterworth. It is in active use but is generally under-utilised, with lower-grade light industrial and open storage to the rear – trailer parking and a disused building (former coach park). The unit to the front of the site is currently occupied by ToolStation as a hardware shop. The rear of the site is accessed via land currently designated as a Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople site.
- 2.43 Adjacent uses to the north and south of the site are industrial (Elizabethan Way and Ladywood Works) and residential areas lie to the west of the site across the road.
- 2.44 The site is generally poor quality (especially the area to the rear of the site as indicated by the purple area on the map) and would benefit from investment, however it is currently in active use so not deemed available for redevelopment or

an addition to supply. It appears to be in four separate ownerships which potentially make comprehensive redevelopment challenging.

Recommendation: The site should be identified as a General Employment Area, given that it is located adjacent to other GEAs and is generally fit for purpose as an employment site but could benefit from upgrade/intensification. It is suitable for E(g), B2 and non-strategic B8 uses.

C&V Business Park, Leicester Road, Lutterworth



- 2.45 An industrial site, c. 2.9 ha in size, located in Lutterworth off the A46 Leicester Road. The site consists of one large factory/warehouse building which is very old (pre-war) and deteriorating in condition, plus several smaller units. There is one more modern unit at the front (east) of the site which is occupied by L&R Storage.
- 2.46 The large factory unit is currently occupied by a number of small businesses. The site has below average intensity of use and activity levels were low at time of assessment. Internal site access and parking is relatively constrained.

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- 2.47 The site is located within an area predominantly used for employment purposes with Elizabethan Way to the south and Cosford Business Park to the north. It is in single ownership, alongside the Cosford Business Park immediately to the north. Residential areas lie to the west of the site across the A426.
- 2.48 Whilst activity levels are low, the site does play some role in providing space for a range of smaller businesses.

Recommendation: The site should be designated a General Employment Area (GEA) as the site's location makes it most suitable for employment purposes. It is suitable for E(g), B2 and non-strategic B8 uses. The flexibility provided by Policy BE3 around supporting broader employment-generating uses, alongside E(g), B2 and non-strategic B8, is particularly important in encouraging investment and regeneration Policy should support investment and in time redevelopment.

Undeveloped / Partially Developed Allocations

Land South of Lutterworth Rd / Coventry Rd (L2), Lutterworth



- 2.49 A relatively narrow, c. 3.4 ha greenfield site located adjacent to the southern edge of Lutterworth separated by the A4303. The site is well-connected to the town of Lutterworth with access to Coventry Road via a roundabout at the entrance to the site. The close proximity to Lutterworth provides a good labour supply for employment development.
- 2.50 The site is well-accessed by road, with the A4303 connecting the site to M1 J20. Some road infrastructure is in place on-site to support development. It adjoins Fairacres Travelling Showpeople site to the south and Lutterworth allotments to the west. There is open countryside to the east. The site is generally flat and benefits from good road access and visibility. The site is located on a hilltop which could result in any development having high visual impacts. Screening would be required to mitigate any noise / visual impact to the adjoining Fairacres traveller site.

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- 2.51 The site is owned by Leicestershire County Council. Planning permission was granted in Aug 2017 for 9,500 sq.m of B1 development (together with the adjoining allotments) with units sizes of up to 1,580 sq.m (16/01288/OUT). Subsequently planning permission was granted for B1 office development of 1,600 sq.m by the County Council in Jan 2018 (17/01670/LCC). Whilst a spine road has been delivered (18/01089/LCC), no development of buildings has occurred.
- 2.52 We understand that historically the site has been marketed principally for B1 (office) space. The evidence however indicates that this is not a particularly attractive location for this use, not least due to weak public transport accessibility and neighbouring uses and demand will have also been influenced by changing working patterns post Covid-19.
- 2.53 An application has recently been granted for roadside services on a 0.69 ha plot, comprising a McDonalds restaurant and drive-thru facility and Costa coffee shop on the western part of the site (22/01318/FUL). This was contrary to the Local Plan policy. Evidence was submitted of marketing but a lack of occupier interest for office development. We understand terms are agreed with both occupiers.
- 2.54 This first phase development is to kick-start delivery of the site and based on our engagement with the marketing agents we understand that they foresee demand for light industrial units of a range of different sizes.

Recommendation: The site should continue to be allocated for employment uses, reflecting its close proximity to the SRN and lack of other sites at Lutterworth which may deliver short-term. It is considered that demand at the site is likely to be greatest for light industrial units, however a policy supporting the full range of E(g) (business/light industrial) uses would be appropriate, considering the proximity to the adjacent residential traveller site. The site provides the opportunity to accommodate smaller industrial units (Class E(g)(iii)).

Lutterworth East SDA

- 2.55 The 2019 Local Plan allocated land for a mixed-use Strategic Development Area (SDA) East of Lutterworth. Policy L1 envisaged development of about 2,750 dwellings together with 23 ha of employment land, made up of 13 ha for storage and distribution (B8) use on land to the south of the A3404 subject to provision of a separate access and comprehensive landscaping scheme to screen the development; and 10 ha for E(g) and B2 uses.
- 2.56 A hybrid planning application was submitted by Leicestershire County Council for the site's development in Feb 2019, and was approved in May 2022. This included a full application for development of a spine road between A4304 Gilmorton Road and the A426 and associated junctions/ accesses. It includes 13 ha of land for B8 development (up to 52,000 sq.m GEA) and 8.5 ha (up to 34,000 sq.m) for E(g) and B2 development. Strategic B8 development is not supported by the consent with a planning condition restricting B8 unit sizes to < 9,000 sq.m.
- 2.57 The illustrative masterplan shows B8 employment focused to the SW of M1 Junction 20; with a new business park development (Swift Valley Business Park) shown on the NE side of the junction. Further employment development is then proposed in the northern part of the site, to the west of Gilmorton Road.
- 2.58 The location of the employment development around M1 Junction 20 is logical and responds to the commercial attractiveness of a junction location and the strategic accessibility which this will bring. This is to be accessed from a new signalised junction on the A4304.
- 2.59 The 2019 Local Plan envisages that development of the land to the south of the A4303 will be for B8 storage and distribution units of less than 9,000 sq.m and the extant consent has a condition controlling this. A Section 73 application was submitted in July 2024 which seeks to remove the restriction on B8 unit sizes and is under consideration (24/00932/VAC).
- 2.60 The 2019 Plan identifies that provision of 10 ha of employment development in the main area of the SDA to the north of the A4304 will be set out through a development

framework/masterplan. We recognise however that the masterplan was prepared before Covid-19 and the associated changes in working patterns.

- 2.61 Nonetheless, land immediately to the north of the A4304 (Swift Valley Business Park, c.3 Ha) remains an attractive location for commercial development and is separated from the residential development to the north by a landscaped buffer. Office market conditions are currently weak, but may change (and may indeed improve) over the plan period. This is a stronger and more commercially attractive location for office development than the allocation Land south of Lutterworth Road/Coventry Road (L2) – it is a prominent location close to the motorway junction where the wider strategic development will help to deliver infrastructure. On this basis, Icen consider that the aspiration should continue to be to deliver a high-quality business park in this area focused on E(g) uses.
- 2.62 In the northern part of the development, further employment land (c 5.5 ha) is proposed acting as a buffer between residential development and the M1 motorway. This remains appropriate, subject to ensuring that the new bridge across the motorway to Leicester Road is delivered to provide access to the site. This employment area is likely to be more attractive to local and regional SME businesses and should provide for E(g) and B2 uses.
- 2.63 We understand that LCC has engaged consultants in Spring 2024 to advise on options to take forward the development, aiming to achieve the highest capital receipt from its landholdings with the least commercial risk and delay. This is considering alternative development options from disposal, varying joint venture structures – such as with a partner to deliver enabling infrastructure and sell serviced plots through to a development partner(s) to deliver both infrastructure and development. There is clearly potential that different models could be used to take forward different parts of the site.
- 2.64 The development of the Land south of A4304 and the Swift Valley Business Park to the north of it are identified in the Phasing Plan as within the first phase of development. Given the limited supply of space, and quality issues with available space, at Lutterworth (leaving aside Strategic B8 development at Magna Park), there is a strong basis for supporting the early delivery of development in these

areas, which does not require the delivery of the link road / bridge over the motorway, subject to the delivery of necessary improvements to the M1 junction and to creation of a suitable access to the A4304 to support development. Land to the south of the A4303 would be suitable for B2 and B8 uses given its road accessibility and separation from residential areas.

- 2.65 **Recommendation: the Council should continue to require employment land to be delivered as part of the SDA and consider making specific employment allocations within a new Local Plan to reflect the East of Lutterworth SDA Illustrative Masterplan.**
- 2.66 **The employment land in the southern part of the site could be brought forward in the short-term, subject to improvements to support access to the site. There is potential for c. 16 ha (13ha south of the A4304 together with the proposed Swift Valley Business Park) of employment development in this area to provide new employment space; with land to the north of the A4304 being suitable for E(g) uses, and land to the south for B2 and B8 uses.**
- 2.67 **The delivery of employment land in the northern part of the site (c. 5.5 ha) is scheduled for delivery in Phase 2 of 4, however it is reliant on the delivery of a new link road and bridge to connect to Leicester Road. It is more likely that this will be delivered in the second half of the plan period.**

3. Magna Park

- 3.1 Magna Park has been developed over the period since 1987, following the closure of Bitteswell Aerodrome, and expanded to become one of the largest dedicated distribution parks nationally, located within the logistics ‘Golden Triangle.’. The first phase of development was granted planning consent in 1987 for c. 390,000 sq.m of development. A second phase of 325,000 sq.m was then granted in 1992. This area is referred to as **Magna Park Central**.
- 3.2 Magna Park and its adjoining committed sites (detailed below) are safeguarded in the 2019 Local Plan for B8 strategic storage and distribution, with the policy only permitting buildings of over 9,000 sq.m gross floorspace. At the time of the Plan’s adoption there were two committed sites with planning permission – Land at Glebe Farm (15/00865/OUT), granted in July 2018 and known now as **Magna Park South**; and erection of a 100,844 sq.m B8 warehouse to the north of the existing estate and north of Mere Lane (15/00919/FUL) which was granted in Oct 2016 and is known as Plot G. This plot (now occupied by Wayfair) together with a further northern expansion, described in the Policy as Land to the North and West of Magna Park, are now referred to as **Magna Park North**. Policy BE2 (3) allocated this latter land for development of 320,000 sq.m of B8 development; and the wider site (including Plot G) was granted planning consent at appeal in Jan 2018 (15/01531/OUT).
- 3.3 The site adjoins the A5, which provides connectivity to the M6 Junction 1 and M69 Junction 1, with the A4303 providing connectivity to M1 Junction 20 (Lutterworth). It is not a rail-served site, but is considered a satellite site as it is located within a 20-mile radius to other rail terminals –at DIRFT and Birch Coppice.

Magna Park Central



- 3.4 Magna Park Central is a large (c. 269 ha), well-established logistics park focussed on logistics and distribution. The site is fully built-out and occupied, with stock varying in age but generally of good quality. Occupiers include major retailers and logistics firms such as ASDA, Primark, Amazon, Lidl and DHL.
- 3.5 The site is located to the west of Lutterworth, bounded by the A5 to the west and the A4303 to the south. The location provides excellent access to the SRN, with the J20 of the M1 in close proximity via the A4303 and J1 of the M69 easily accessible via the A5.
- 3.6 The site is of high quality with mature landscaping. Road access and circulation throughout the site is excellent, with wide roads suitable for HGVs. The estate is fully managed with 24/7 security on site. The is fully occupied at the time of the site assessments.

3.7 A number of the older units are now becoming somewhat dated, and we note that there are 11 units and c. 415,000 sq.m B8 floorspace which were constructed before 2000, and may in time become outdated and require replacement. However, the large plots on site provide the potential for redevelopment to deliver modern units which meet the necessary market requirements in terms of power, height etc.

Recommendation: The site should continue to be safeguarded through policy for strategic storage and distribution (Class B8) uses in units of > 9,000 sq.m as part of a single designation including Magna Park Central, North and South.

Magna Park: Wayfair Site (DHL Supply Chain)



3.8 The site forms part of Magna Park North – a northern extension to Magna Park Central - and consists of one large 100,000 sq.m storage and distribution centre with ancillary offices (Unit G). The unit is currently occupied by home retailer Wayfair and serves as their main UK distribution hub.

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- 3.9 The warehouse was completed in Aug 2019 on a 55 ha plot and provides high quality, modern premises set within well-landscaped grounds.
- 3.10 Access to the site is good, with new, high-quality access roads suitable for HGVs which link the site to the A5. Circulation on-site is good, with adequate associated car parking provision. Bus stops are located nearby, served by bus routes 8, X45 and X84.

Recommendation: The site should now form part of an existing employment site, potentially together with other development in Magna Park North (see below). The site should now form part of a single Magna Park designation to be safeguarded through policy for strategic storage and distribution (Class B8) uses in units of > 9,000 sq.m.

Magna Park North



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- 3.11 A large site (c. 164 ha) forming a significant northern extension to the well-established Magna Park Central logistics and distribution park. The development is planned to deliver seven logistics units plus a Country Park.
- 3.12 The first phase of development has been completed with three logistics units (MPN 1 - 18,590 sq.m, MPN 2 – 46,750 sq.m and MPN 3 – 27,610 sq.m) completed and occupied by Iron Mountain and Bleckmann. MPN 4 (28,910 sq.m) has also been built and is occupied by logistics company LX Pantos.
- 3.13 Phase II of development offers three speculative and build-to-suit units:
- MPN 5 (70,732 sq.m) – speculative, available Q2 2025
 - MPN 6 (79,690 sq.m) – build-to-suit
 - MPN 7 (38,239 sq.m) – build-to-suit
- 3.14 The 3 remaining plots are development ready with earthworks and infrastructure complete. GLP began construction of MPN 5 in May 2024, with construction due to be completed in June 2025. It is reasonable to expect these to be build out in the short-term over the next 5 years (2024-29).
- 3.15 The site is well-suited to strategic B8 uses with significant clustering already at the dedicated logistics and distribution park and good access to the SRN.
- 3.16 Recommendation: Planning policies should support the delivery of the remaining committed plots in Magna Park North, totalling 18.3 ha. The site should form part of a single Magna Park designation to be safeguarded through policy for strategic storage and distribution (Class B8) uses in units of > 9,000 sq.m.**

Land South of Magna Park (Magna Park South)



- 3.17 Magna Park South is a recent, speculatively developed site delivered by GLP consisting of eleven large B8 units. The Site forms a southern extension to the established Magna Park Central and is approx. 88 ha in size. The site offers brand new, high-quality large industrial units of varying sizes set within well-landscaped grounds.
- 3.18 It is located just off the A5 (accessed via the A4303) and in close proximity to Junction 20 of the M1. Roads on site are wide and circulation is good. The site is well-served by public transport, with bus stops on site served by bus routes 8, X45 and X84.
- 3.19 At the time of the site assessments, six of the eleven units are occupied and being used for strategic warehousing/ logistics purposes. Occupiers include Amazon, JD.com, Whistl, Movianto, Unipart and Centrica.
- 3.20 The five vacant units at the time of site visits included:
- MPS 5 (17,353 sq.m – to let, available for occupation)

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- MPS 6 (19,650 sq.m) – appeared vacant but recently let to Centrica;
 - MPS 9 (36,089 sq.m) – to let, available for occupation
 - MPS 10 (12,739 sq.m) – to let, available for occupation
 - MPS 11 (11,113 sq.m) – to let, available for occupation

3.21 Units MPS 9, 10, and 11 were all completed within the 2023/24 monitoring year. On the basis of the above, total availability at the time of the site assessments was 77,300 sq.m across four units.

3.22 The timing of the delivery of these units has coincided with weaker market conditions in the big box market which have limited market activity over recent quarters. However, they provide good quality modern floorspace in an attractive location and on a successful site. The units provide a 15m+ clear height, are built to a solar-ready building design. MPS10 and 11 have achieved BREEAM Excellent. It is reasonable to expect these units to be taken up short-term, subject to market demand.

Recommendation: This is a high quality, newly developed strategic B8 site providing high quality logistics space. It is well suited for this purpose due to its location near to the SRN and adjacent to other logistics sites. The site should now form part of a single Magna Park designation to be safeguarded through policy for strategic storage and distribution (Class B8) uses in units of > 9,000 sq.m.

Magna Park: Zone 2 / Land South of George House



- 3.23 This is a currently undeveloped plot of land (c. 6.7 ha) lying adjacent to Magna Park South. Construction is underway at the time of assessment, with a temporary cement plant on-site.
- 3.24 The site has planning permission as part of the wider development of Magna Park North (15/01531/OUT) for a 134 space HGV parking facility, associated gatehouse and HGV driver training centre, vehicle wash and fuelling facilities and a rail freight shuttle terminal, with associated hardstanding, landscaping works and SuDS facilities. However we understand that GLP, who own the freehold of the site, is intending to deliver instead a biomethane refuelling station, petrol station with ancillary retail and lorry parking for c. 100 HGV on land to the south of Mere Lane. This has outline planning consent (22/02002/OUT) and (as at Summer 2024) we understand that GLP was currently finalising a commercial agreement with BP to take this forward. A Reserved Matters application has since been submitted and

approved (November 2024) for the alternative lorry park at Mere Lane (22/02002/OUT).

3.25 GLP has therefore promoted this site for commercial development through Harborough's Call for Sites. The site access can be achieved from the Coventry Road to the A4303.

3.26 The evidence thus indicates that the extant planning consent will not be delivered. The Council will need to be content that there is sufficient lorry parking provision available to meet needs at Magna Park and avoid parking on internal estate roads. But the current evidence suggests that this site could be considered through the Local Plan for further strategic B8 development.

Recommendation: The site should be considered as a candidate site for strategic storage and distribution (Class B8) uses in units of > 9,000 sq.m. If allocated the site should also form part of a single Magna Park designation once brought forward to safeguard through policy for strategic storage and distribution (Class B8) uses in units of > 9,000 sq.m.

4. Market Harborough

- 4.1 This section turns to consider existing employment land provision in Market Harborough. This is the largest town and economic centre in the District which offers business premises for a range of different sizes of businesses, and has a stronger quantum of existing office floorspace relative to other locations.
- 4.2 Existing employment provision is focused in particular on the NE side of the town, stretching from sites around Fernie Road/ Great Bowden Road, close to the train station, east along the A4304 to the Riverside Industrial Estate and Point Business Park, which adjoins the A6. A second concentration of employment space is along the B6047 Harborough Road on the northern side of town, with new space being brought forward at Airfield Business Park and as part of the NW Market Harborough SDA. The third main area of employment space is to the south of town, but has been less successful – both in terms of attracting investment from industrial occupiers and the delivery of space at Compass Point Business Park.
- 4.3 Market Harborough has the strongest office provision in the district, with a range of good quality office space at Business Parks such as Compass Point and Peaker Park. Whilst office provision across the district is predominantly focussed on SMEs, a number of larger firms have located their head offices in Market Harborough, for example Joules and Deichmann.
- 4.4 Market Harborough is the main focus of new office development in the district, with delivery on three different sides of the town. However, build out has been slow as a result of reduced office demand and rising construction costs, with substantial pipeline development remaining. The main concentration of businesses is on the eastern side of town close to the A6; but some provision of office development could also be anticipated with residential growth along the B6049 Leicester Road.
- 4.5 Market Harborough also has significant industrial provision. In the town centre, this predominantly consists of average quality, aging stock, however there are examples of more recently developed stock and a strong pipeline of new industrial space along the B6049.

Existing Key Employment Areas (KEAs)

Compass Point Business Park, Harborough Road, Market Harborough



- 4.6 Compass Point Business Park is an edge of town business park located on the southern edge of Market Harborough. The site is allocated within the 2019 Local Plan for Class B1 (now E(g) uses (business/light industrial).
- 4.7 The site is located on the A508, providing easy access by road into the Town Centre. It can also be accessed via public transport, with a bus stop located nearby served by bus routes 77 and X7. Bus frequencies are c. hourly. Market Harborough train station is located approximately 1.4 miles from the site providing access to midland mainline rail services including direct trains to London.
- 4.8 The site currently comprises a group of four two-storey office buildings at the entrance to the site (northern end) and the Harborough Enterprise Centre and

Rieker Head Office, warehouse and outlet store at the southern end of the site. Both of these areas form a KEA, c. 2.3 ha in size.

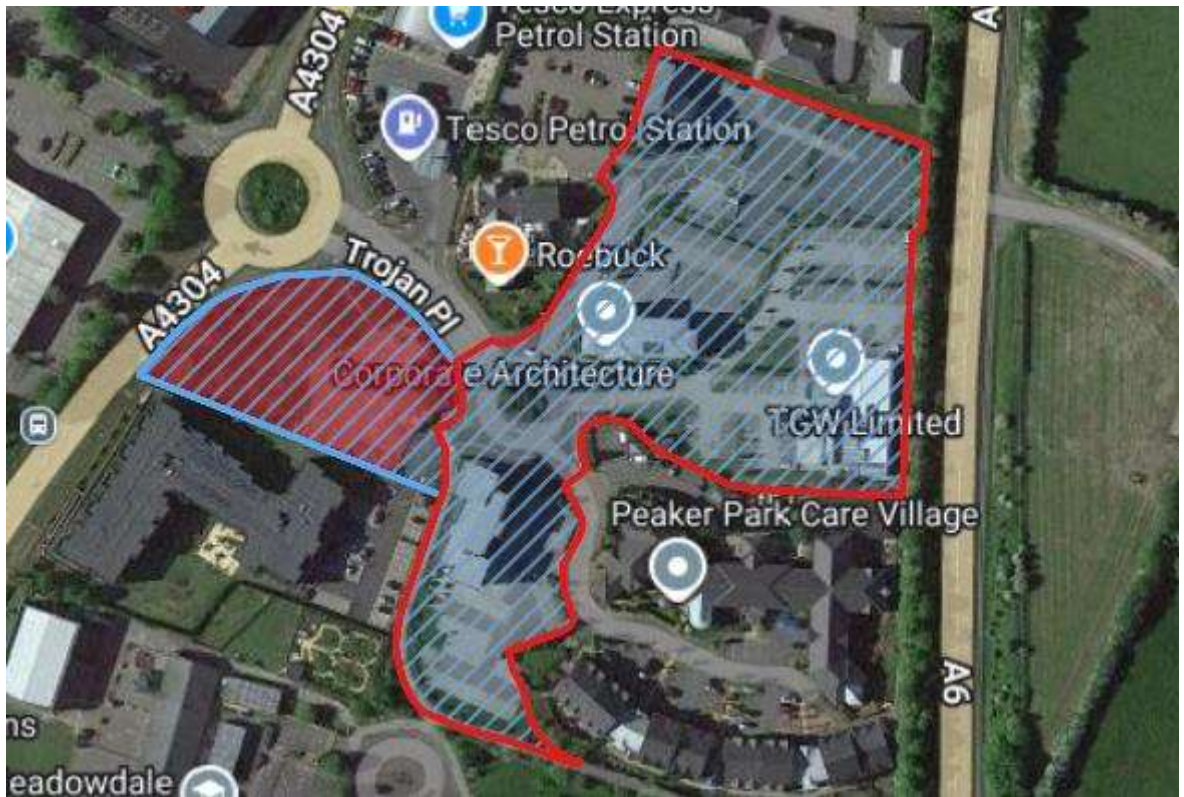
- 4.9 The four office buildings at the northern end of the site provide modern, high-quality premises built within the last decade. The environment surrounding the office buildings is of good quality and there is adequate car parking. Occupiers include Abtec (building technologies), YMD Boon (architects), Deichmann (retail head office). There is evidence of some non-office Class E(g)(i)(ii) (formerly B1) uses such as WTA Dance Studio (estimated <5% of stock is in these uses).
- 4.10 However, there are a number of vacancies, with an estimated vacancy rate of 5-10%. Anson House (489 sq.m is currently vacant and being marketed for sale and to let and Hudson House (511 sq.m) is being marketed for sale. The last development completions on site where in 2019/20.
- 4.11 Harborough Enterprise Centre comprises a 3-storey, recently built office building designed for multi-occupation by growing small and medium sized businesses. There is ample car-parking to the front of the premises. Harborough Enterprise Centre is relatively well occupied, with a 92% occupancy rate in November 2024, however there is active marketing of “office suites from 532 sq ft to 2076 sq ft for immediate let” (49 – 193 sq.m). The vacancy rate is thus approximately 8% at the time of writing.
- 4.12 The larger office/warehouse unit is located to the south of the Enterprise Centre, occupied solely by Rieker (footwear). The premises also includes a retail store and outlet centre for the brand.
- 4.13 There are two plots of available land on the site, as identified by the red shaded area on the map. The first plot of land lies between the offices at the northern end of the site and the Enterprise Centre. The second plot of land lies to the west of the road. This area forms allocation MH6 in the current Local Plan. In both cases, road infrastructure has been provided to enable access to the plots should development come forwards. There are currently no submitted planning applications in relation to either of the plots of land. The residual land available is 4.3 ha.

4.14 However, the western plot appears to be in two separate ownerships which may make development more complex; whilst the eastern plot is broadly triangular in shape and under single-ownership. Surrounding land to the west is controlled by Persimmon Homes who have planning permission for development of 350 homes (20/00891/FUL). It seems possible that the landowners have aspirations for alternative uses such as residential.

This site currently has less critical mass and profile relative to other established employment locations at Market Harborough. The delivery of this site has essentially stalled. It is not particularly attractive for office occupiers given its distance from the town centre and station, lack of nearby amenities and Food & Beverage offering and public transport accessibility. However, it provides serviced plots which can accommodate light industrial uses.

Recommendation: This is a good-quality site with good amenity in a sustainable location which can accommodate E(g) office and light industrial development. The KEA boundary should be amended to include the office stock towards the northern end of the site and the Rieker head office at the southern end of the site. Significant unconsented land within the amended KEA boundary, totalling 4.3 ha, should be considered for allocation.

Peaker Park, Rockingham Road, Market Harborough



- 4.15 A good quality office site located on the north eastern edge of Market Harborough with four existing modern office buildings of 2-3 storeys. There is an evident concentration of office space in this area. The existing site is c. 1.6 ha in size.
- 4.16 TGW Logistics Group occupy two of the buildings, Optimax occupy one building and Venari House is let to multiple firms. There is no evident vacancy.
- 4.17 Adjoining the site is a Tesco Petrol Station and pub, a retirement living development (Elizabeth Place) and assisted living residence (Peaker Park Care Village). There are residential areas to the south, further office uses to the north (The Point) and mixed employment uses to the west across the A4304.
- 4.18 The site is easily accessible via road and public transport. The A4304 junction with the A6 is in close proximity and there is adequate parking provision throughout the site. The site is within walking distance from Market Harborough train station (approx. 15 minutes) and there are bus stops outside the entrance to the site.

4.19 There is one vacant plot of land on the frontage of the site adjacent to Elizabeth Place. Full planning permission was granted in May 2020 for the erection of a three storey office building on this 0.35 ha plot (20/00207/FUL) and is included within the supply as a commitment but has since lapsed with no development coming forward. This is to be expected given office market conditions since 2020. However, this remains a key frontage site for the business park and remains suitable for office floorspace; albeit that development might not occur in the short-term.

Recommendation – The site should continue to be protected for employment uses as a Key Employment Area (KEA) (Use Class E(g)). It provides high quality office premises in a suitable location close to other office space and employment premises. The vacant plot (0.35 ha) should continue to be considered as part of the supply for office development and is included as a commitment within the supply position. The KEA boundary should be amended to include the currently vacant plot to affirm the principle of employment use on the site.

The Point Business Park, Rockingham Road, Market Harborough



- 4.20 A well-maintained, good quality office park (c. 2.6 ha) located on the northeastern edge of Market Harborough consisting of 2-3 storey office buildings constructed in the 2000's.
- 4.21 There is an above average level of vacant space on this site (estimated at between 10-20%). Vacant premises at the time of the site assessments across the site include:
- 19 The Point (380 sq.m) – to let
 - 15 The Point, first floor (170 sq.m) - to let.
 - Unit 25 (475 sq.m) - to let/for sale
 - Unit 30, ground floor (80 sq.m) – to let
 - 37 The Point, (12-50 sq.m) – to let

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- 4.22 We understand that some units have been relet, including the Market Harborough Building Society taking on the former Joules unit.
- 4.23 The site is easily accessible via road and public transport. The A4304 junction with the A6 is in close proximity and there is adequate parking provision throughout the site. The site is within walking distance from Market Harborough train station (approx. 15 minutes) and there are bus stops outside the entrance to the site.
- 4.24 The large car park on the frontage of the site is not currently being utilised. This area (particularly the northern car park) could, in theory, be intensified but could equally be required to provide car parking if office occupancy levels increase. There are currently no active planning applications in relation to this area of the site.

Recommendation: The site should continue to be protected for employment use through policy as a Key Economic Area (KEA) – specifically for Class E(g) uses. The Point plays a key role in providing office space within the District. Although there is some vacancy, agents report that levels of vacancy at the site have now started to reduce. The KEA boundary should be extended to include the car park.

Airfield Business Park, Leicester Road, Market Harborough



- 4.25 A Leicestershire County Council development comprising a mix of B class employment uses with small and mid-sized units. The site is located northwest of the town centre of Harborough and is accessed and bound to the east by the B6047 Harborough Road. The site is allocated in the 2019 Local Plan in Policy MH5 for approximately 6 ha of B1, B2, non-strategic B8 development. Including the developed and allocated land, the total site area is approx. 9.6 ha.
- 4.26 The site is located sustainably in close proximity to Market Harborough (approx. 1.5 miles) which provides a wide range of services and facilities. The site has good public transport accessibility. It is served by bus routes 44, X3 and X7 and bus services connect the site to Market Harborough railway station providing further connectivity.
- 4.27 The site forms an extension of the pre-existing Airfield Business Park built in the 2010's (currently designated as a KEA) and is accessed via the existing roundabout

on Harborough Road. The site is adjacent to the Greenacres Traveller site to the south and agricultural land to the west on which the North West Market Harborough SDA is permitted.

4.28 Phase 1 of the MH5 allocation was completed in 2021 and consists of 12 good quality, modern units (totalling 7,430 sq.m). All units are fully occupied with occupiers including Troubador Publishing, Bramble Foods and Bakenology.

4.29 Phases 2 and 3 are yet to be developed (approx. 3.8 ha of land remains undeveloped at the site). Consent (2021/Reg3aMa/0122/LCC) was granted for Phase 2/3 in October 2023. A further planning application (24/00120/CMA) was granted permission in July 2024 for an alternative scheme with fewer, larger units. The application proposes construction of five new E(b), E(g)(iii), B2, B8 buildings with ancillary office. Two of the new buildings are proposed for drive-thru use contrary to policy (MH5 Airfield Business Park). According to a local agent, 82% of the units are pre-let.

Recommendation: The focus of demand at this location is for small and mid-sized industrial units. The boundary of the Key Employment Area should be amended to include the entire site – including the entirety of Phases 1, 2 and 3. Class E(g), B2 and non-strategic B8 development are suitable on the remaining land (3.8 ha).

Bowden Business Village, North of Market Harborough



- 4.30 A small (c. 1 ha), out-of-town business village located to the north of Market Harborough (approx. 2.5 miles), accessed off the B6047 Harborough Road providing SME office premises. This southern end of the site comprises 1/2-storey office buildings with some clustering of occupiers within the property business sector (TEP, The Fox Group). A day nursery/pre-school occupies the building on the northern portion of the site.
- 4.31 The site is generally well occupied, with two vacancies at present (approx. <5% vacancy):
- No 2 The Chambers (83 sq.m) – To Let
 - Office 1 (28 sq.m) – To Let
- 4.32 The site is bounded by the B6047 Harborough Road to the west and by the A6 to the north, with a roundabout providing access to both roads. There is a bus stop

near the roundabout served by bus routes 44 and X3. Agricultural land surrounds the site to the east and south.

- 4.33 Whilst there is some convenience provision / drive-thru restaurant located in reasonable proximity, the site remains relatively isolated in a rural location. Access to the site is not straightforward, with potential for this to constrain more substantive development of the site and limit its suitability for other non Class E(g) uses.

Recommendation: The site should be re-designated as a General Employment Area, rather than an a Key Employment Area, given that it provides limited critical mass of activity and is at an isolated location.

Existing General Employment Areas (GEAs)

Sovereign Park, Lathkill Road, Market Harborough



- 4.34 A c. 2.9 ha business park located towards the south of Market Harborough with a mix of office and light industrial uses. The office buildings appear to be built around the 1990s/2000s whilst the light industrial stock appears older (1970s). The site is average in terms of quality of stock and environment.
- 4.35 The site is relatively well occupied and active. Major occupiers include CDS Global and Bramble Foods. Glenold House, located towards the rear of the site, is significantly less active than other units with only two cars in the car park when assessed but lights on in reception. The property appears rundown and not well-used. This SE plot (0.25 ha) could thus provide potential for redevelopment and intensification in the future, but cannot be currently regarded as available. There is a grassed area at the rear of the site south of Bramble Foods; but this is controlled

by the existing business and is not considered available for wider employment development. Both of these areas have been identified by the shaded purple area on the map above.

- 4.36 The site is in close proximity to residential uses to the north and west, a cemetery to the south and allotments to the east.
- 4.37 The site is accessed via a residential street (Lathkill Street) which in turn is accessed from the A508 Northampton Road. Car parking provision is adequate although there is some on-street parking.
- 4.38 Access to the site via public transport is good. There is a bus stop opposite Bramble Foods on Lathkill Street which is served by bus route 30 and further bus stops on the A508 served by bus routes 18, 30 and the X7.

Recommendation: The site should remain protected as a General Employment Area (GEA). Policy should support redevelopment and intensification as appropriate to provide more modern floorspace. Suitable uses are E(g) and B2 uses, subject to ensuring no additional adverse detrimental impact on residential amenity.

Courtyard Workshops, Bath Street, Market Harborough

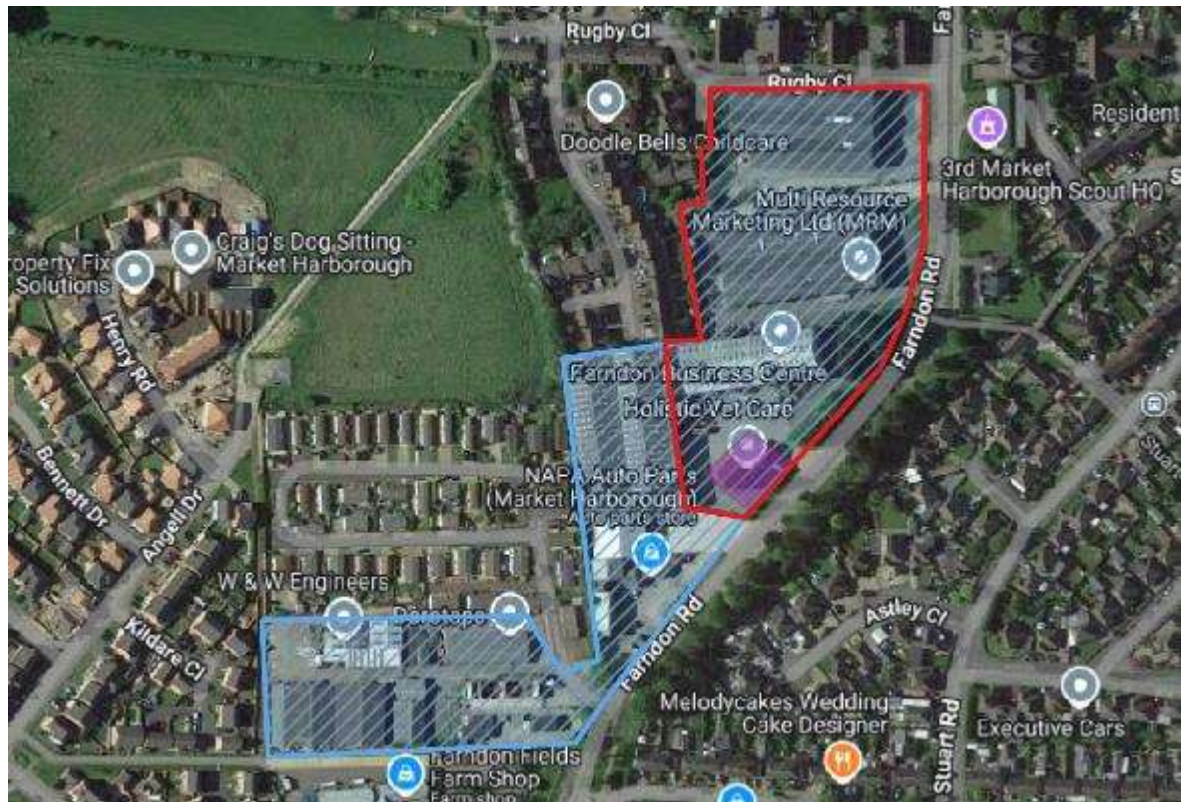


- 4.39 A c. 0.8 ha light industrial site located in a primarily residential area of Market Harborough. The site is divided into two distinct sub-sites – Courtyard Workshops and Sutton Court. Quality is average across both sites and circulation is relatively poor.
- 4.40 The Courtyard Workshops portion of the site comprises small workshop units aimed at SMEs and is managed by Leicestershire County Council. Stock is dated (1980s/1990s) but of average quality and most units appeared occupied. Over time, it may become more difficult to let the units as they become increasingly dated. Unit 2 appeared vacant at the time of the assessment but does not appear to be being actively marketed. Occupiers include On the Edge (picture framing and art), Active Controls Ltd (electricals manufacturer) and Dance Factory63 Fitness (dance/fitness studio). The County Council has submitted their part of the site through the Call for Sites process indicating an ambition for redevelopment to provide modern employment premises.

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- 4.41 Sutton Court adjoins the site to the east with a separate entrance. This consists of similar 1980s/1990s SME workshops. Occupiers are local SMEs including Harborough Garden Machinery, TableScape (table centrepiece rental) and TS Engineering.
- 4.42 The site is accessed via a residential street (Bath Street) and is therefore not suitable for HGVs. Access via public transport is good with bus stops directly at the site entrance served by bus route 30. The site is close to the Town Centre and just over 1 mile by road to Market Harborough train station.
- 4.43 Residential areas surround the site and Harborough Community Church is adjacent to the west. A planning application for the redevelopment of industrial land for residential use immediately to the east of the site boundary (22/01090/OUT) was approved in November 2024.

Recommendation: The site should be retained as a General Employment Area (GEA) and protected for E(g) and B2 uses. It is a well-used site and plays a key role in providing local employment opportunities and providing affordable premises which support SME businesses.

Farndon Road Business Centre / Industrial Estate, Market Harbourough



- 4.44 A lower grade, dated industrial site but within a sustainable location within Market Harbourough with public transport provision nearby (bus stop located approx. 0.2 miles away on Stuart Road). The site is c. 1.6 ha in size and is split into 4 distinct sections with separate entrances to access.
- 4.45 The southernmost portion of the site is occupied by Roy Hubbard Motors (service and diagnostic centre) and All Vehicle Parts (automotive part suppliers). The environment is relatively poor with poorly paved road surfaces, insufficient parking and poor circulation.
- 4.46 Farndon Business Centre comprises three units – two medium industrial units and an office building for SMEs (Barking House) which appears to have been converted from residential. Barking House, which is shaded purple on the map above, is a poor quality 1970s building with three vacant office units at the time of the assessment – it has low market attractiveness as an office premises in its current condition and

presents a redevelopment opportunity. The industrial/warehouse unit occupied by Sealants International appears underused with low levels of activity.

- 4.47 Multi Resource Marketing (MRM) occupy a medium-sized office and warehouse unit. This appears well-used and active.
- 4.48 The northernmost portion of the site comprises low quality, dated industrial units occupied by VERY displays.
- 4.49 A further set of industrial units is located to the south west of the site, adjoining Gracelands Park Homes which are included within the suggested extended boundary in blue. Circulation is very poor but units are generally well occupied.
- 4.50 The site is under multiple ownership, with each plot being owned separately. This limits the potential to redevelop the site comprehensively
- 4.51 **Recommendation: The site is a dated, under-utilised industrial site but is in a sustainable location. However, the quality of the site is generally poor and the site is in need of investment. For these reasons, the site should remain protected as a General Employment Area. The flexibility provided by Policy BE3 around supporting broader employment-generating uses, alongside E(g), B2 and non-strategic B8, is particularly important in encouraging investment and regeneration. The site boundary should be reviewed to include southernmost section of the site, the unit occupied by JPS Trading Services and the area adjoining Gracelands Park Homes. This increases the total site size to 3.1 ha.**

Fernie Road Industrial Estate, Market Harborough



- 4.52 A c. 1.5 ha general industrial estate with a light industrial focus, located close to the town centre in Market Harborough and the rail station. Units range in terms of age and quality but are predominantly from the 1980s. The site is well occupied but environmental quality across the site is average.
- 4.53 The site has relatively good access to the A6 via the A4304, however some of the roads on-site are narrow and would be unsuitable for HGVs. Parking in some areas (e.g. Albany Road) is tight and limits circulation. Access to the site via public transport is good, with bus stops at the site entrance (served by bus route 44) and the train station and town centre being located within walking distance.
- 4.54 Much of the site is adjacent to residential uses, often in close proximity. There are significant further light industrial/industrial uses adjacent to the southwest of the site along Fernie Road which are not currently within the GEA boundary but appear well-occupied and used.

- 4.55 There is evidence of increasing alternative (non E(g)/B2/B8) uses on the site (approx. 20%), with occupiers such as a nursery, an auction, CrossFit centre etc.
- 4.56 The site is under multiple ownership which may limit potential for comprehensive redevelopment.

Recommendation: The site should remain protected as a General Employment Area, as it is a well-occupied industrial estate but could benefit from upgrade/renewal. The site boundary should be amended to include the portion of the industrial estate bounded by Fernie Road and York Street. This would increase the total site area to 2.9 ha.

Forester Foods, Great Bowden Road, Market Harborough



- 4.57 This is a single-user site, currently occupied by the Moguntia Food Group. The site consists of a large warehousing unit from the 1980s towards the rear and a set of 8 light industrial/storage units towards the front, one of which appears to be being used as a factory shop. The remaining units do not appear to be in use and this part

of the site could be redeveloped or intensified subject to availability and owner requirements. The total site area is c. 1.9 ha.

4.58 In terms of adjacency, the site adjoins Market Harborough train station and the rail line to the east, and residential and industrial (Fernie Road Industrial Estate) to the west.

4.59 The site has relatively good access to the A6 via the A4304 and internal roads are suitable for larger lorries. Car-parking provision on-site appeared sufficient. Access to the site via public transport is good, with bus stops at the site entrance (served by bus route 44) and the train station and town centre being located within walking distance.

Recommendation: The site should continue to be protected as a General Employment Site. There may be some opportunity for intensification towards the front of the site where the factory shop is located (shaded purple on the map) as the units appear under-utilised at present. Demand is likely to be for E(g)(iii)/B2/non-strategic B8 (light industrial/industrial/warehousing), however a policy supporting all E(g) uses would be suitable. The site's location adjacent to the railway line and station and other employment areas make it suitable for a range of employment uses.

Riverside and Riverside End Industrial Estates, Market Harbourough



- 4.60 A relatively large mixed employment site with an industrial focus located towards the north-east edge of Market Harbourough. The majority of the site (Riverside Industrial Estate) is currently designated as a General Employment Area, whilst Riverside End Industrial Estate in the north west corner of the estate is identified as a Key Employment Area. The total site area (including the Riverside IE and Riverside End IE) is c.12.6 ha.
- 4.61 Buildings vary in terms of age and quality across the site, however units are generally well occupied and well used. At the time of the site assessments, the vacancy level was low. Some land is used for open storage of machinery / self-storage.

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- 4.62 The site adjoins Market Harborough railway station and railway line to the west and other employment uses to the east (Rockingham Road Industrial Estate, Welland Industrial Estate), separated by the River Welland.
- 4.63 Key occupiers include the King group of companies (King Trailers, King Highway Products), Stephen Sanderson Transport and Glenmere Timber. The site also supports some lower quality uses such as scrap metal recycling and the recycling and household waste site managed by Leicestershire County Council.
- 4.64 The site has good access to the A6 via the A4304. Internal roads are wide and are suitable for larger lorries however parking is tight with some on street parking evident.
- 4.65 The site is under multiple occupancy and portions of the site lie within Flood Zones 2 and 3.

Recommendation: The site should remain a General Employment Area to protect it for employment uses (Use Classes E(g), B2, non-strategic B8). It is a well-occupied and well used site which plays an important role in supporting industrial uses in Market Harborough. Its location adjacent to the railway line and other employment uses makes it suitable for employment activities. Riverside End Industrial Estate could be included within the Riverside Industrial Estate GEA given that the type/age/quality of units are not significantly different from the remainder of the estate.

Saw Mill, Gores Lane, Market Harborough



- 4.66 A single-user site most recently occupied by Glenmere Timber, consisting of 1970s warehouses and 1980s offices. The existing site area is c. 1.3 ha. Environment across the site is poor, with the northern warehouse particularly run down. Activity levels are very low and the site is significantly under-used. The majority of the site is in single ownership.
- 4.67 The site is located adjacent to residential uses to the east, west and south and employment uses to the north (separated by the A4304).
- 4.68 Planning permission was granted in October 2023 for the demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment of the site as a food retail store (Aldi); with outline permission granted for employment development (Classes E(g), B2 and B8) on the remaining 0.45 ha of land. This residual land, accessed from Gores Lane, is currently being marketed for sale. It should therefore be noted that there is a strong likelihood of a 1 – 1.45 ha loss of employment land associated with the retail proposal.

4.69 Recommendation: An application has been approved for alternative retail use of the majority of the site. The boundary of the GEA should be reduced to cover the remaining area of land retained for E(g)/B2/non-strategic B8 to reflect both the outline application associated with the site and to protect the principle of employment at this accessible and sustainable location. This would reduce the site area to c. 0.5 ha.

Rockingham Road Industrial Estate, Market Harborough



4.70 A well-used industrial estate located towards the north-eastern edge of Market Harborough with a focus on mid-sized industrial / warehousing units and trade counters. The site is c. 2.4 ha in size and stock dates to the 1990s/2000s.

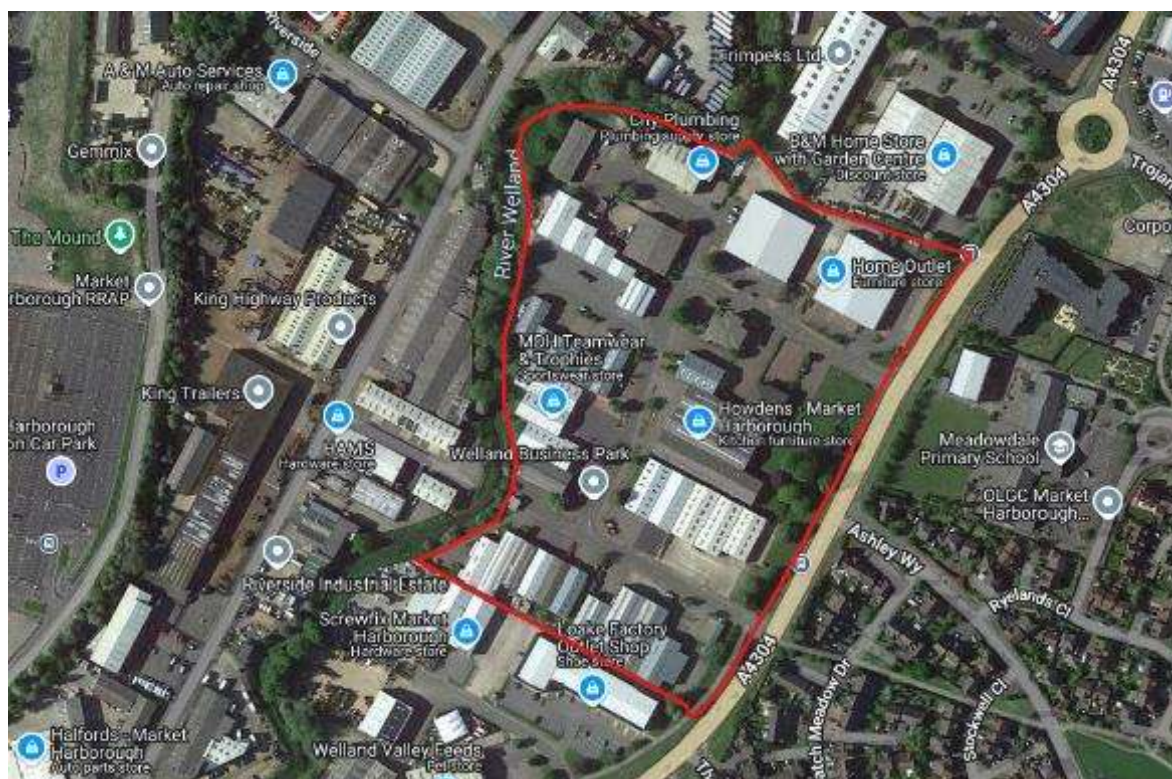
4.71 The site is fully occupied, with occupiers including Morris Leslie Plant Hire, Screwfix, Travis Perkins, Welland Valley Feeds, Loakes Factory Outlet Shop, Mini Mischiefs (soft play) and Snap Fitness (gym).

4.72 The site is bounded by the River Welland to the west and the A4304 to the south and east. Other industrial uses lie adjacent, with Welland Business Park to the north and Riverside Industrial Estate to the west. Residential areas lie to the south, separated by the A4304.

4.73 The site is easily accessed by road via the A4304, with the A6 in close proximity. Parking provision on-site is sufficient. There are bus stops relatively nearby on the A4304 and the train station is within walking distance.

Recommendation: Continue to protect the site for employment uses (Class E(g), B2, non-strategic B8) as a General Employment Area. It is a well-used site located in an area with other well-established industrial estates.

Welland Industrial Estate, Market Harborough



4.74 A c. 6 ha industrial estate / business park located towards the north eastern edge of Market Harborough with units of varying ages (1980s onwards). Overall, the site is

of good quality with high occupancy levels and clear investment in estate roads, environment and signage. There is evidence of recent investment and development.

- 4.75 In general, there is an industrial/engineering focus with businesses of a range of sizes including some SMEs. There are some trade counter / quasi retail uses and a small number of offices including Fisher German and Radmat.
- 4.76 2 new-build units have recently been developed on the exit from Valley Way to the A4304 and are being actively marketed to let totalling approx. 940 sqm.

Recommendation: The site should be protected for employment uses (E(g), B2, non-strategic B8) and should be retained as a General Employment Area. It is a good quality site with very little vacancy and supports a wide range of business activities.

Euro Business Park, Market Harborough



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- 4.77 Located just off the A4304 on the northeastern edge of Market Harborough, Euro Business Park consists of the Joules Head Office and a B&M Bargains retail unit (including garden centre). The existing site is c. 2.2 ha in size.
- 4.78 The Joules head office is a high-quality, recently developed 2-4 storey building with plenty of dedicated car-parking provision. The site is very actively used.
- 4.79 The site is well connected to the SRN with the A4304 joining the A6 half a mile from the site. Market Harborough train station is also within walking distance (approx. 0.8 miles away) and there is a bus stop near the entrance to the site on the A4304.
- 4.80 The site is located close to multiple other employment areas, with Welland Industrial Estate to the south, The Point Business Park to the east and Riverside Industrial Estate to the west beyond Welland River. There is agricultural land to the north.
- 4.81 The GEA boundary currently excludes the car parking for the Joules unit and adjoining land proposed to be developed as a wildflower meadow / picnic meadow (c. 0.76 ha). Consideration might reasonably be given to including this area within the site allocation to facilitate expansion of the business, subject to demand.

Recommendation: The site should be protected for employment uses (Class E(g), B2, non-strategic B8) and designated as a Key Employment Area. The Joules HQ is a high quality, recently developed site supporting skilled employment. The boundary should be amended to exclude the retail provision (B&M Bargains) and to include the Joules HQ car parking and adjoining land. This would reduce the site size to c. 1.8 ha.

The Shires, Euro Business Park, Market Harborough



- 4.82 The site is part of the wider Euro Business Park and consists of one 1990s industrial unit occupied by Frimpeks Ltd., a manufacturer of inks, coatings and adhesives. The existing site is c. 0.7 ha in size.
- 4.83 The site is well connected to the SRN with the A4304 joining the A6 half a mile from the site. Market Harborough train station is also within walking distance (approx. 0.8 miles away) and there is a bus stop near the entrance to the site on the A4304.

Recommendation: The site should continue to be protected as a General Employment Area for employment uses (Class E(g), B2, non-strategic B8). It is a functioning employment site with a single occupier located in an area with multiple well-established industrial estates. The boundary should be amended to include the B&M unit to the east of the site which was previously included

within the Euro Business Park GEA, increasing the site size to c. 1.8 ha. The B&M unit is more similar in type, quality and age to the unit at The Shires.

Undeveloped / Partially Developed Allocations

Wellington Business Park (Land at Airfield Farm), Market Harborough

- 4.84 Land at Airfield Farm is allocated within the 2019 Local Plan as part of the North West Harborough SDA to provide approx. 13.1 ha of employment land for E(g) (formerly B1), B2 and non-strategic B8 development. Policy MH4 identifies relevant constraints and development considerations including potential land contamination, a gas pipeline through the southern side of the site, flood mitigation and views towards Foxton Village. The Policy expected provision of around 4.3 ha for E(g)(i) and (ii) uses (15,000 sq.m), 4.3 ha for E(g)(iii)/B2 industrial (17,000 sq.m) and 4.5 ha (18,000 sq.m) for non-strategic B8 development.
- 4.85 Outline planning consent was granted for demolition of the farm buildings on site and construction of a business park on the site (Wellington Business Park) in Oct 2023 (21/00545/OUT). The site area is 13.49 ha. This provides for up to 35,001 sq.m E(g)(iii)/B2/B8 industrial floorspace, up to 5,994 sq.m E(g)(i) office floorspace and 250 sq.m of retail (E(a/b)). The developer is ADF Commercial Development Ltd.
- 4.86 The indicative layout (shown below) shows office space focused on the Harborough Road site frontage, with industrial development to the centre and west of the site. The access is already in place for development and has been delivered as part of the wider SDA residential provision.



- 4.87 The site is well-located having regard to both existing commercial provision at Airfield Business Park to the south; and residential growth which is helping to deliver site infrastructure. Agents ABP report healthy demand for employment space at this broad location, focused on demand for industrial units of varying sizes and we would envisage that this site will come forwards as Airfield Business Park is in the final phases of delivery/complete.
- 4.88 The site is located sustainably in close proximity to Market Harborough (approx. 1.5 miles) which provides a wide range of services and facilities. The site has good public transport accessibility. It is served by bus routes 44, X3 and X7 and bus services connect the site to Market Harborough railway station providing further connectivity.
- 4.89 **Recommendation: This site is well-located and expected to play an important role in enabling employment growth in Market Harborough. The focus of demand at this location is for small and mid-sized industrial units. Given the site's proximity to Market Harborough, there may also be potential for future office demand. The site should continue to be allocated for employment uses and now the site has access and planning consent, we can expect delivery to commence short-term. On completion, Wellington Business Park should be**

identified as a Key Employment Site. Class E(g), B2 and non-strategic B8 development are suitable.

5. Broughton Astley

- 5.1 Broughton Astley is a large village with a good range of facilities and amenities which provides a sustainable location for employment. Broughton Astley's employment provision is focussed on industrial premises which are located towards the north of the town across two sites: Cottage Lane Industrial Estate and Estley Green Business Park.
- 5.2 The village currently offers a good variety of industrial stock. Cottage Lane Industrial Estate is a well-established and active industrial estate comprised of aging, average quality units. Estley Green Business Park has been developed recently and provides higher quality, more modern small to medium industrial units, a number of which are trade counters.
- 5.3 The completion of Estley Green Business Park may aid the delivery of the North of Broughton Way (EMP 1) employment allocation, however rising build costs and interest rates have been preventing progress to date.

Existing Key Employment Areas (KEAs)

Cottage Lane Industrial Estate, Broughton Astley



- 5.4 This site lies to the south of Cottage Lane in Broughton Astley, in a central location within Broughton Astley and is c. 5.4 ha in size. It is an existing industrial estate focused on Swannington Road and Stanier Road.
- 5.5 The site is active and well used and accommodates a range of businesses of varying sizes. Overall, it has an industrial focus, with most premises dating from the 1980s and 1990s. It is focused on providing space for local SME businesses, particularly in manufacturing/engineering. However it includes some smaller warehousing/logistics operations, the largest of which is Unit 1 (Pinnacle International Freight – approx. 4,740 sqm). There is evidence of recent development and investment.

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- 5.6 Generally, the site functions well and environmental quality is reasonable. We understand that there are some surface water flooding issues but no other evident environmental constraints.
- 5.7 The site is accessed directly from the B581 Broughton Way which runs through the settlement. Internal access is reasonable, although there is some evidence of on-site parking on Stanier Road at the time of the site assessment. Mature trees provide a buffer between the site and the residential development to the south.
- 5.8 The X84 bus route provides an hourly peak service to Leicester and Lutterworth. Public transport access is thus average/poor. Access to the SRN is reasonable, with the site located approx. 5 miles from J2 M69. The site is sustainability located within the village of Broughton Astley, with associated amenity provision.
- 5.9 Overall, the site performs an important local function in providing employment opportunities within the settlement. It performs well with no evident vacancy units or land at the time of the site assessment.
- 5.10 **Recommendation: The site should be retained as a Key Employment Area and protected for E(g), B2 and non-strategic B8 uses. It plays a key role in providing local employment opportunities and supporting SME businesses.**

Proposed GEAs/KEAs

Estley Green Business Park, Box Road, Broughton Astley (BANP 1A)



- 5.11 The Estley Green Business Park is c. 2 ha in size lies immediately to the north of the Cottage Lane Industrial Estate and has been brought forward as part of the mixed-use development at Land East of Broughton Way in line with Policy 1A in the Broughton Astley Neighbourhood Plan 2013-28 (made Jan 2014). The mixed-use development received outline planning consent in Nov 2014 (13/011142/OUT). This included provision for up to 5,500 sq.m of employment development.
- 5.12 Subsequent Reserved Matters consent was granted in Oct 2015 for development of 18 industrial units, varying in size from approx. 25 – 545 sqm. Phase 1 was completed in 2017/18 and remaining units have been delivered in blocks between 2019 and mid-2023. A residual site area of 0.3 ha was recorded at the time of monitoring (31/03/2023) associated with Unit 16/17.

- 5.13 The development had been completed at the time of the site assessments in September 2024 and was fully occupied, providing good quality modern units for small businesses. It appears to remain in a single ownership (Jelsons).
- 5.14 **Recommendation: This site has been delivered since the adoption of the 2011-2031 Harborough Local Plan and should now be designated through the new Local Plan as a Key Employment Area. It is suitable for E(g), B2 and non-strategic B8 uses.**

Undeveloped / Partially Developed Allocations

Land North of Broughton Way (Elm Business Park), Broughton Astley (BANP EMP1)

3.15.4 EMPLOYMENT AREA – EMP 1

Land north of Broughton Way amounting to 6.8 ha allocated for commercial, industrial, retail and community development.



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- 5.15 This site is a greenfield site which is an extant allocation from the Broughton Astley Neighbourhood Plan 2013-28. It adjoins the B581 on the northern side of the settlement.
- 5.16 The Neighbourhood Plan allocates it for mixed employment / service use and leisure use, to create employment for local people and contribute to the settlement's economy. The Plan (p20) identifies that provision of office premises for small and medium-sized businesses and small-to-medium sized retail space was a priority.
- 5.17 Whilst the overall site area is 6.9 ha, the Neighbourhood Plan envisages 10,200 sq.m of commercial space and 2,300 sq.m office space (rounded).
- 5.18 An outline application for mixed use development was approved in Dec 2020 (19/00856/OUT) comprising B1 offices, B2 general industry, B8 storage and distribution, A3 cafes and restaurants, D1 uses including healthcare and a children's nursery and D2 leisure uses. The indicative masterplan showed 9,847 sq.m of industrial space and 2,322 sq.m of office space together with the other uses identified, with development set back from the Coventry Road frontage to allow for additional tree planting.
- 5.19 The applicant subsequently gained detailed planning permission in April 2022 for Phase 1 comprising B2/B8 industrial development of four units on the western part of the site (22/01383/REM). This is being marketed⁴, with potential for sub-division of some units, to accommodate small units of between 409 – 957 sqm as well as two larger units of 3,855 sq.ft and 4,645 sqm.
- 5.20 Road access to the site is reasonable given its location within a rural settlement. The site is located within 3 miles of the MRN (A426) which links the site to Leicester, Lutterworth and Blaby. and approx. 3.5 miles from J2 M69. The X84 bus route provides an hourly peak service to Leicester and Lutterworth. Public transport access is thus average/poor. The site is sustainability located within the village of Broughton Astley, with associated amenity provision.

⁴ <https://www.brackley-propdev.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/ELM-Business-Park-Brochure.pdf>

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- 5.21 Industrial development is likely to be the higher value-generating use of those proposed. The site is in single ownership and is currently being marketed by a commercial developer.
- 5.22 We consider the site to remain suitable for employment or mixed-use (employment, commercial, retail) development. There is mature vegetation on the Coventry Road frontage which will help to screen the development. Screening of the development from the north and east will also be required. These will impact the developable area.
- 5.23 Through engagement of the site agents we understand that the rise in build costs and current higher finance costs are currently impacting viability, as will be the case with other commercial developments.
- 5.24 The site is to be accessed from a new signal-controlled junction on Broughton Way, with the development additionally expected to deliver improvements to the B4114/B581 Coventry Road junction to the north of the site. These upfront infrastructure costs also influence scheme viability. There is a pending application seeking to remove the condition requiring works to this latter junction in advance of the Phase 1 development (23/00139/VAC).
- 5.25 The developer remains committed to the site and it is being actively marketed. It will be necessary to pre-let / sell a critical mass of floorspace to support the first phase of development. Iceni consider that now that the Estley Green Business Park development is fully occupied, this should help to support demand, and we would envisage the development of the site in the short-to-medium term.
- 5.26 We would expect demand to be focused on industrial units, with delivery of office space being more challenging, in the short/medium-term.
- 5.27 **Recommendation: the site should continue to form part of the District's employment land supply as a commitment or by allocation in the Development Plan (either the Local Plan or NDP). It is considered a deliverable employment site, with the potential for development of 4.8 ha of E(g), B2 and non-strategic B8 uses as part of mixed-use development. Higher provision of B-class / Class**

E(g) employment uses on the site, could be supported in subsequent phase/s subject to market demand.

6. Kibworth

- 6.1 Kibworth is a large village located between Market Harborough and Leicester with the A6 running through the village.
- 6.2 Existing employment provision is focussed towards the eastern and western edges of the town, with good quality office provision for SMEs and a small amount of industrial provision of varying age and quality.
- 6.3 Kibworth has limited industrial stock at present, but construction of Beauchamp Business Park is underway which will deliver 9,280 sq.m of industrial space. This demonstrates a local market for provision of small business space for local SME businesses.

Existing Key Employment Areas (KEAs) / General Employment Areas (GEAs)

Kibworth Business Park, Kibworth Harcourt



- 6.4 Kibworth Business Park is a small triangular shaped site located on the southern end of Kibworth Harcourt, between the A6 Harborough Road the rail line. It is c. 1.5 ha in size and accommodates 6 buildings which comprise two-storey offices and associated parking. It is accessed directly from the A6. There are regular bus services to Leicester and Market Harborough, but no immediate local services close by. It is currently designated as two separate KEAs: Nursery Court and Milestone Court.
- 6.5 The office buildings on-site date from the 1990s/2000s and are generally in good condition. Environmental quality is also good, and the immediate setting is attractive. Parking provision is limited but appeared adequate at the time of the site assessments.
- 6.6 The site has no vacant land with development potential. At the time of the site assessments the vacancy rate was approx. 5-10% -Unit 1 Nursery Court (c. 223 sqm) was vacant and marketed for development.

- 6.7 **Recommendation: the site provides good quality modern office and plays an important role in supporting local small businesses. It is suggested that the two current KEAs are merged to form one single Key Employment Area suitable for E(g)(i) and E(g)(ii) office uses as the two KEAs do not vary in type/quality/age of premises.**

The Hatchery, Harborough Road, Kibworth Harcourt



- 6.8 This site is identified as a General Employment Area, with the principal occupier being Crouch Recovery, whose HQ premises are on the adjacent Kibworth Business Park. It is identified as Crouch Commercial Park. This site accommodates its depot which accommodates vehicle storage, including winching/lifting apparatus and cranes, as well as servicing activities. The existing site is c. 1.4 ha.
- 6.9 Buildings on site vary in age and there is evidence of investment with delivery of a new portal frame industrial unit at the rear of the site (15/01505/FUL).

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- 6.10 At the front of the site, on the Harborough Road frontage, is a residential property together with a retail use – with businesses A Farley and Dubarry selling footwear and clothing from dated workshop units. The Council might reasonably therefore give consideration to amending the site allocation boundary to exclude these units. This would reduce the site area to c. 1.3 ha.
- 6.11 Whilst the site's location on the A6 provides good access, internal circulation is tight. There are residential properties which are immediately adjacent and impact the nature of uses which would be acceptable – which would not include B2 industrial development.
- 6.12 **Recommendation: The Council should retain this site as a General Employment Area but might give consideration to amending the site boundary to exclude the retail businesses on the site frontage, as shown in blue on the image above. It is suitable for E(g) and non-strategic B8 uses.**

Proposed KEAs/GEAs

Priory Business Park, Kibworth Harcourt



- 6.13 This is a local industrial estate, 1 ha in size, on the NW side of Kibworth Harcourt which comprises 14 small light industrial units and a total of c. 3,800 sq.m floorspace. It is accessed from Wistow Road which links the site to the A6. It is not currently designated within Local Plan policy.
- 6.14 The site has been intensely developed and site circulation and parking provision are therefore tight. The quality of the units on-site, which appear to have been constructed in the 2000s, is however good and it plays an important role in providing local employment opportunities and supporting the local SME business base.

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- 6.15 The site is fully occupied and actively used. The Council granted permission in Dec 2022 for the occupation of one of the units by a local Veterinary Clinic (sui generis) (22/00838/FUL). Another key occupier is a Bentley car repair business.
- 6.16 **Recommendation: This site should be designated as a Key Employment Area as part of a wider designation which also covers the adjoining developed parts of the Beauchamp Business Park. It is considered suitable for E(g), B2 and non-strategic B8 uses**

Undeveloped / Partially Developed Allocations: Beauchamp Business Park, Kibworth Harcourt (K1 Allocation)



- 6.17 This is a new business park development which is being brought forward by Clowes Developments on the NW side of Kibworth Harcourt, accessed from Wistow Road which connects the site to the A6. The site is c. 5.7 ha in size. It forms part of the BE1 / K1 allocation in the 2019 Local Plan for E(g), B2 and E(a) retail development.

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- 6.18 The first phase of development (19/02005/FUL) was under-construction at the time of the site assessments and was due to complete in Q2 2024. This comprises 20 units, the majority of which are small units of 118 sqm or 232 sqm size available on a freehold basis.
- 6.19 Construction of Phase 2 (23/01066/VAC) began in May 2024 comprising two additional terraces of small units and a self-contained detached unit, with the developer reporting strong local demand and Unit E being under offer.⁵ Phase 2 is due to complete in late 2024.
- 6.20 The scheme will provide high quality modern units for local SME business. The quality of build and environment is good (with EPC A rating targeted) and the developer reports strong occupier demand for freehold units.
- 6.21 The remaining land, on the eastern side of the site, forms part (Phase 3) of the original 2016 outline application (from Manor Oak Homes) but has yet to be developed. It was anticipated to include further industrial development and retail/office units on the NE side of the plot, accessed from Warwick Road. It is in separate ownership and is c 3.1 ha in size.
- 6.22 The site is considered suitable for further employment development, subject to market demand. The success of the Beauchamp Business Park illustrates a healthy demand for light industrial premises for SME businesses in this location. It is anticipated that this site should come forwards in the medium-term. Its adjacency to industrial uses means it is not considered suitable for residential development.
- 6.23 **Recommendation: the initial now developed phases of the Beauchamp Business Park site should be designated as a Key Employment Area, together with the adjoining Priory Business Park, reflecting the quality of space and critical mass. It is considered suitable for E(g), and B2 development. This is identified by the green boundary on the map.**

⁵ <https://clowes-beauchamp.co.uk/>

Significant unconsented land (Phase 3), to the south of Priory Business Park (3.1 ha) within the amended KEA boundary should be considered for allocation It is suitable for E(g)and B2 development.

7. Fleckney

- 7.1 Fleckney is a large village located to the west of Kibworth. The village has a cluster of industrial premises on the southern edge of the village. Stock comprises mostly of light industrial and industrial units of a range of sizes. The majority of stock is aging, with the exception of Network Rail's newly developed maintenance depot. The industrial sites are well used, with site visits not identifying any vacancy. There remains undeveloped, allocated land to the north east of the existing estates.

Existing General Employment Areas (GEAs)

Churchill Way Industrial Estate, Fleckney



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- 7.2 This is an established industrial estate, c. 8.9 ha in size, located on the southern side of Fleckney, and accessed from Saddington Road. It comprises predominantly light industrial and industrial units of a range of sizes, including larger units occupied by COBA Group and UK Distributors. Other occupiers include Fiona Cairns (cake manufacturing) and Amber Valley Developments.
- 7.3 There is a particular focus of units from the 1970s/early 1980s which are now dated and are likely to have poor energy efficiency. A range of units are relatively low rise and may not meet modern business expectations.
- 7.4 The estate is generally well laid out and well occupied, with no evident vacancy within the existing estate at the time of the site assessments. The northern side of the estate comprises older units and adjoins residential uses and is identified as a separate general employment area (Victoria Works, Saddington Road).
- 7.5 There is little evidence of recent development on the site, and Icenl consider that there is a case for seeking to encourage regeneration – with investment and redevelopment to provide over time better quality, modern business units. The site is however in multiple ownerships.
- 7.6 There is one vacant, overgrown plot of land (c. 0.6 ha) which may provide a development opportunity.
- 7.7 **Recommendation: this is a well-occupied and important site in providing local employment opportunities and should be protected. The Council might however consider a more flexible policy approach to attract investment which allows E(g), B2 and non-strategic B8 development but also supports new development (rather than conversion) for other employment-generating uses with the aim of improving the quality of premises over time. In these terms, it may be better identified as a General Employment Area. The GEA boundary should be extended to include the developed and un-developed portions of the F2 allocation and the better quality portion (southeast) of the Victoria Works GEA – discussed in further detail below. The vacant plot (0.6 ha) within**

this area provides potential for development for E(g), B2 or non-strategic B8 development.

Victoria Works, Saddington Road, Fleckney



- 7.8 This is a c. 1.1 ha site which adjoins the Churchill Way Industrial Estate. It comprises dated, pre-war workshop space with some more modern 1980s/90s space. Key occupiers include Linc Plastics, Thrive Fulfilment and Monser Bookshop, who use space for storage and distribution.
- 7.9 The site provides low value/quality space and has a generally poor level of amenity and environmental quality. Internal circulation on site is tight, and there is limited parking provision. There is no recent planning history.
- 7.10 Three separate ownerships make the prospects of comprehensive site development unlikely; however, there could be potential for redevelopment of the more dated

space in the western part of the site subject to viability. The western part of the site immediately adjoins residential development.

- 7.11 **Recommendation: the quality of the older space on this site no longer meets modern commercial standards and we do not consider warrants protection for employment use. It should therefore be de-designated as a GEA. The more recent space on the SE side of the site should be included in the Churchill Way Industrial Estate GEA.**

Undeveloped / Partially Developed Allocations

Land off Marlborough Drive, Fleckney



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- 7.12 This site adjoins and is essentially an extension to the Churchill Way Industrial Estate, to the NW of it. This site overall is c. 2.7 ha in size. It is allocated in the 2019 Local Plan in Policy F2 for E(g)(iii), B2 and non-strategic B8 development which expects access to the site to be through Marlborough Drive and layout / design of development to be in keeping with that of the existing industrial estate.
- 7.13 Outline consent for up to 8,500 sq.m of commercial space was granted in June 2019 (16/02030/OUT). The eastern portion (c. 1.5 ha) of the site has been recently developed to provide a new maintenance depot for Network Rail (21/02058/REM), comprising a B2/B8 development with ancillary office space over 2 storeys (Nightingale House) and associated car park.
- 7.14 The remainder of the site (1.2 ha) remains undeveloped: this is owned by Venture Properties Group. There is an extant Reserved Matters consent for the development of 10 employment units on the western portion of the site (21/02061/REM, granted Sept 2022). The agents (Mather Jamie) have indicated to Iceni (summer 2024) that that the land was still available, and consideration will be given to design and build options on this land. Iceni understands from HDC that development of this land has now commenced.
- 7.15 **Recommendation: the allocation has been partly delivered with c. 1.6 ha of land remaining where development is now progressing. This area is suitable for E(g), B2 and non-strategic B8 uses. With new development having been delivered or progressing, this site should now therefore be included within the Churchill Way Industrial Estate GEA.**

8. Other Rural Sites

- 8.1 This section considers and appraises the remainder of sites assessed, which include a mix of existing employment sites (GEAs), areas covered by site specific policies in the adopted Local Plan or Neighbourhood Development Plan employment allocations.

Agricultural Barns, Gliding Club, Husbands Bosworth



- 8.2 This c. 0.3 ha employment site adjoins the Gliding Centre, to the south of Husbands Bosworth, on the western side of the airfield. It comprises a number of industrial buildings, the majority of which date from the 2000s, and occupied by Niel Burke Joinery; as well as a cafe. Overall, the site provides good quality premises, and there is evidence that the quantum of floorspace has been extended over time. It is actively used with good levels of activity on site.

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- 8.3 Whilst a relatively rural location with no other employment areas within the settlement and poor public transport accessibility, the site provides good quality space and the access is suitable for current activities.
- 8.4 The site boundary does not accurately reflect the current buildings on the ground and should be amended to include the buildings on the north and western side of the current red line and the car park to the south.
- 8.5 **Recommendation: the site should remain identified as a General Employment Area, recognising its role in providing local employment and the quality of the floorspace. It is suitable for E(g), B2 and non-strategic B8. The site boundary should be amended to reflect the geography of the site on the ground as shown in blue on the image above. This would increase the site's area to c. 0.7 ha.**

Leicester Airport, Stoughton



- 8.6 As set out in the 2019 Local Plan, this site is a former Second World War airfield located south of Leicester, and SW of the village of Stoughton. It is accessed from

the B582 Gartree Road. It is used for the flying of light aircraft and helicopters, currently by Leicester Aeroclub, who are the airport operator, and Helicentre Aviation, which trains helicopter pilots, with a go karting circuit also on-site. The site is c. 11.3 ha in size.

8.7 The age and quality of buildings on the site varies and includes hangers of varying ages and some temporary portacabin structures. There is limited B-class employment on this site. The site has relatively poor road access and this is a key factor affecting its development potential.

8.8 The current Local Plan policy – Policy BE5 – supports development required for the operational use of the airfield, aviation or ancillary uses and the conversion/reuse of permanent buildings on the site. E(g)(ii), E(g)(iii), B2 and B8 development is permitted within the area defined as Complex North of Gartree Road on the adopted LP policies map provided it does not conflict with safety requirements of existing uses, is necessary for the continuation of an existing enterprise, facility or operational use of the airfield, is of suitable design and does not result in traffic generation impacting on the amenity of local residents. B8 units are limited to 500 sq.m gross floorspace.

8.9 The site access through narrow rural roads means it is not suitable for substantive or wider employment development. The noise impacts associated with the current helicopter activities also impacts on the site's attractiveness for general employment uses. However, it is appropriate that the site's role in supporting the current activities, including pilot training and general aviation, are supported. Supporting the site for these uses is valuable not only for Harborough but also for the wider Leicester and Leicestershire FEMA and wider region, as recognised by Paragraph 100f of the National Planning Policy Framework which emphasises the importance of maintaining a national network of general aviation airfields.

8.10 Recommendation: the policy approach for this site remains appropriate seeking to permit the expansion of existing uses and upgrading of premises relating to these uses, which are aviation-related, where these require an airport location and do not result in significant adverse impacts on nearby

villages/residents through additional traffic. Consideration might be given to the consolidation of the boundary of the different plots.

Bruntingthorpe Proving Ground



- 8.11 As set out in the 2019 Local Plan, this is a 265 ha former airfield which has been used as a vehicle proving ground since the early 1970s. The site has been used for a variety of purposes including open storage (mainly of vehicles), car auctions and an aircraft museum as well as limited flying. There are three large hangar buildings on the site along with other former airfield structures. An extensive hard standing area sits on the north side of the runway and is used for the storage of new vehicles awaiting sale.
- 8.12 The site is located in a rural area north east of Lutterworth. Nearby small settlements include Bruntingthorpe, Upper Bruntingthorpe, Peatling Parva and Gilmorton. There are few amenities nearby due to the site's relatively remote location. The south east of the site is adjacent to Bruntingthorpe Industrial Estate.
- 8.13 The main entrance to the site is located on Bath Lane, with commercial traffic routed towards the A5199. There is no access to the site via public transport.

8.14 The current Local Plan Policy – Policy BE4 – permits development where the proposed use is for an authorised use including the proving and testing of motor vehicles, vehicle storage, the aircraft museum and related tourism activity, car auctions and aircraft recycling, maintenance and storage. Development associated with the operation of the site by vehicles for corporate entertainment is also permitted. Any development needs to conform to noise limits, have no unacceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area, retain, replace or enhance the existing perimeter tree planting, not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety and provide highway mitigation where necessary.

8.15 There are a number of planning applications associated with the site:

- 22/00663/FUL – Approved (May 2022) - Change of use of hardstanding to include vehicle storage.
- 20/01154/FUL – Approved (Feb 2021) – Change of use of managed grassland to storage of motor vehicles (B8).
- 16/00621/FUL – Approved (Sep 2016) – Erection of a B2 Smart Paint Facility (810m²) in addition to 2.2Ha of permeable surfacing for vehicle storage/transfer.
- 13/01770/FUL – Approved (May 2015) – Change of use from storage and distribution facility (Class B8) to events facility (Class D2).
- 20/00755/HAZ – Withdrawn (Nov 23) – Application for hazardous substances consent for the storage of LPG

8.16 Recommendation: The policy approach for this site remains appropriate permitting development for approved uses including the proving and testing of motor vehicles, vehicle storage, the aircraft museum and related tourism activity, car auctions and aircraft recycling, maintenance and storage.

Bruntingthorpe Industrial Estate



- 8.17 Bruntingthorpe Industrial Estate is an industrial site providing premises for a range of small to medium-sized businesses in a variety of old former military buildings and more modern buildings. The existing site is c. 5 ha in size.
- 8.18 The site adjoins Bruntingthorpe Proving Ground to the north and is otherwise surrounded by agricultural land. It is located in a rural area north east of Lutterworth. Nearby small settlements include Bruntingthorpe, Upper Bruntingthorpe, Peatling Parva and Gilmorton. There are few amenities nearby due to the site’s relatively remote location.
- 8.19 The site is reasonably active given its rural location. There is an automotive focus with occupiers such as Transporter HQ (VW Transporter parts supplier), Camper Glass (campervan windows) and Navis Wheels (wheels for VW Transporters). A relatively large proportion of the site is also used for open storage and could be intensified. Royal Enfield UK are a significant occupier with the UK Technology Centre and R&D Centre located in a modern premises on the site.

8.20 Access to the site is via Mere Lane, however some units have exclusive access via the main entrance to Bruntingthorpe Proving Ground off Bath Lane. Vehicle weight restrictions (max 7.5 tonnes) are in place to prevent heavy goods traffic from travelling via Upper Bruntingthorpe or Walton. The site is inaccessible via public transport.

8.21 The current Local Plan Policy – Policy BE4 – permits development of Class B1b, B1c, B2 and B8 uses at Bruntingthorpe Industrial Estate if it would have no unacceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area, traffic generated by the development would not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety or severe residual cumulative impacts on the road network, it is subject to the approval and implementation of a Travel Plan and any individual unit for Class B8 use does not exceed 500sq.m in gross floorspace.

8.22 There are a number of planning applications associated with the site:

- 23/00638/FUL – Approved (Sep 2023) - Erection of a mixed use building (Class E and B8)
- 21/02244/FUL – Approved (Feb 2022) - Erection of 1 industrial unit with associated parking and services

8.23 Recommendation: The policy approach for this site remains appropriate, permitting development of Class E(g)(ii), E(g)(iii), B2 and non-strategic B8 uses. There may be potential for intensification in some areas of the site where land is being used for open storage, subject to market demand. The site boundary should be amended to include the industrial uses north east of the site which increases the total site area to 8.3 ha.

Billesdon Depot, Gaulby Road, Billesdon

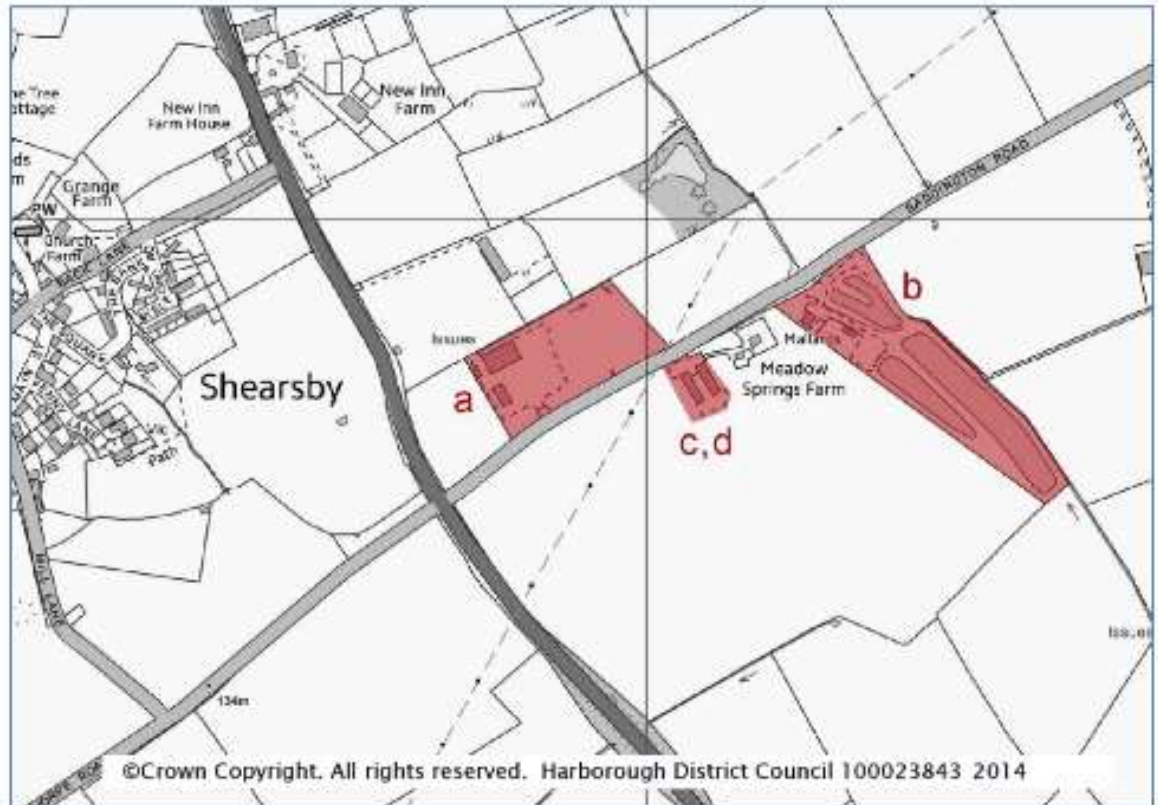


- 8.24 The Billesdon Neighbourhood Plan 2022-31 allocates the former LCC Depot (1.5 ha) for mixed-use development comprising Commercial Business and Service and Local Community Uses (Classes E and F2) and housing or a Fire and Rescue Station with Training Facility. Policy supports a minimum of 1Ha for the provision of starter or grow-on units and a maximum of 10 dwellings on up to 0.5Ha or a Fire and Rescue station. Whilst the site has been allocated in the neighbourhood plan for employment use since 2014, the site has not come forwards.
- 8.25 The site is currently vacant and situated on the edge of the village. It slopes slightly away from the road. We consider that the site is poorly located for employment development: it is on the opposite side of the village from the A47 proximity to which would support greater demand. It is also separated from the core of the village and associated services. We do not consider it to be a deliverable employment site.

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- 8.26 **Recommendation: the Council should not rely on this neighbourhood plan allocation and should not include this site within its supply of deliverable employment sites.**

Shearsby Neighbourhood Plan Sites

- 8.27 Shearsby Neighbourhood Plan, which was made in 2017, allocates three sites for employment development. Policy E1 supports small-scale expansion of existing employment premises across the Parish and seek to protect against the loss of E(g) commercial premises on land on the Saddington Road employment site.
- 8.28 Policy E2 then supports development of additional E(g) light industrial uses at sites identified as (a) and (b) in the plan below, located to the north and south of Saddington Road, for E(g) light industrial provided it relates to small-scale leisure or tourism activities, or other commercial/employment development suited to a countryside location; and there would be no unmitigable adverse impact or conflict on residential/community amenity/uses or highway safety. B2 or B8 development is not supported.



- 8.29 The Policy is relatively restrictive of the nature of uses supported. The sites are located in a rural location at some distance to larger settlements, and away from the main road network. Commercial attractiveness is weak.
- 8.30 There has been no evident development over the period since the Plan was made; nor have any planning applications been brought forward.
- 8.31 **Recommendations: the Council should not rely on these neighbourhood plan allocations and should not include them within its supply of deliverable employment sites to meet District employment needs.**

A1. Site Assessment Proforma
