

Rationale for the selection of Key Employment Sites within the Hart Core Strategy Preferred Approach, July 2011

I Introduction

- 1.1 The Core Strategy Preferred Approach lists the following 'key employment sites' to be protected under the terms of Policy SS5: Employment Sites:

Fleet and Church Crookham	
Waterfront Business Park	Ancells Business Park
Pyestock Area A	Pyestock Area B
Redfields Industrial Estate	Land adjacent to Redfields Industrial Estate
Grove Farm (Crookham Village)	Martin Lines
Fleet Business Park	Potter's Industrial Park
Blackwater and Yateley	
Blackwater Industrial Park	Blackbushe Industrial Estate
Hook	
Bartley Wood Business Park	Land at Rawlings Road
Murrell Green Business Park	
Rural Sites	
Lodge Farm, North Warnborough	Eversley Haulage Yard, Hartfordbridge

- 1.2 This paper outlines the rationale for the selection of these sites, giving reasons why some other employment sites have not been selected.

2 Background

- 2.1 A Joint Employment Land Review for Surrey Heath, Hart and Rushmoor¹ (the ELR) concludes that *across the study area* there is a significant over-supply of office floorspace and a small surplus of industrial floorspace.
- 2.2 At the *district* level, Hart would appear to have enough *office* space to meet its future needs but that, qualitatively, the supply is mixed. There is a current surplus of outdated office space, centred on out-of-town locations around Fleet and Hook where there appears to be a significant over-supply of older space unattractive to the market.

¹ Published in November 2009 by Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners and available at <http://www.hart.gov.uk/index/top-planning/planning-policy/planning-policy-evidence-base/planning-policy-employment-land-review.htm>

- 2.4 The supply of *industrial* space in Hart is limited, with a small shortfall forecast during the plan period. There is a need to increase the supply of small scale industrial units in particular.
- 2.5 A key conclusion for Hart is that there is no need to allocate new employment sites, but that the majority of existing employment sites, particularly those with industrial floorspace, should be retained. The ELR recommends a re-balancing of uses within existing sites from office to industrial floorspace.
- 2.6 These findings need to be considered alongside the need for new housing in Hart and the priority attached to making the best use of previously-developed land. A surplus of employment land offers the opportunity to release some sites for residential or mixed-use development thereby reducing the level of greenfield land needed to meet strategic housing requirements.

3 Selecting key employment sites

- 3.1 The ELR ranks the district's main employment sites as either: good, average or lower quality (see Appendix I). This is based on an assessment against the following criteria:
 - current use
 - strategic and local road access
 - proximity to urban areas, and access to labour and services
 - proximity to incompatible uses
 - site characteristics and development constraints
 - market attractiveness
 - planning factors
- 3.2 **The Council's approach is to designate good and average sites as Key Employment Sites, with the following exceptions:**
 - **Guillemont Park, Hawley**
 - **Fleet town centre**
 - **The western end of Rawlings Road Industrial Estate, Hook**
 - **Potter's Industrial Park, Church Crookham**

These are dealt with in turn below.

Guillemont Park, Hawley

- 3.3 Located immediately north of junction 4a of the M3 motorway, this is ranked as a good site, but has not been included as a key employment site. The site, which includes three large office buildings, a partially constructed building, and a substantial area of surface car parking, has recently been vacated.
- 3.4 Given the surplus of office space, and in the context of a strategy to distribute residential development around Hart, this site provides a good

opportunity for new housing in the north-eastern part of the district. The new development would effectively become an extension of Farnborough, a town larger than any in Hart, with access to a wider range of facilities. Other opportunities in the north-east of Hart, for example around Blackwater and Hawley, are limited due to the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area and River Blackwater floodplain.

Fleet Town Centre

- 3.5 Fleet town centre is ranked as average, but is not listed as a key employment site. Fleet town centre provides a range of retail, employment, civic and community uses. Rather than identify the town centre as a key employment site, it is treated as a strategic location, to be considered in a more holistic way. The strategy recognises the benefits of redeveloping outdated, surplus office space for residential and other town centre uses to promote its vitality and viability, and contribute to strategic housing requirements at perhaps the most sustainable location in the district.

Land at Rawlings Road Industrial Estate, Hook

- 3.6 This site is ranked as good and is included as a key employment site with the exception of the western end, fronting Station Road, where some obsolete offices have been empty for many years. Rather than protect this area for employment, the overriding objective is to lift the quality of the area in urban design terms at this important 'gateway' to Hook. A more flexible approach is therefore proposed in this area.

Potter's Industrial Park, Church Crookham

- 3.7 Despite being ranked as a lower quality site, this is retained as a key employment site. The site performs poorly against a number of the criteria, but the ELR acknowledges that it is fully-developed and occupied with buildings in a reasonable condition, and meets local needs for small-scale industrial accommodation of this type. No other 'lower quality' sites are built and operational and currently meeting a need, and as such have not been identified as key employment sites. Appendix B sets out the current status of other lower quality sites assessed in the ELR.

Ranking of employment sites

	Site Name (Ref No)	Settlement	Size (ha)	Potential Uses	Score (out of 30)	Overall Rank
1	Bartley Wood Business Park	Hook	9.6	B1(a)	27	Good Quality
2	Former Gullemond Barracks	Hawley	13.7	B1(a)	25	
3	Land at Rawling's Road	Hook	19.4	B1, B2, B8	25	
4	Blackwater Industrial Park	Blackwater	9.4	B1(a)	25	
5	Waterfront Business Park	Fleet	4.4	B1	24	
6	Pyestock Area A	N/A	47.5	B1, B8	24	
7	Ancells Business Park	Fleet	15.6	B1, B8	22	
8	Pyestock Area B	N/A	12.0	B1, B8	22	
9	Fleet Town Centre	Fleet	N/A	B1(a)	21	
10	Blackbushe Industrial Estate	Yateley	8.2	B1, B2, B8	20	Average Quality
11	Lodge Farm	Hook	3.3	B1(a), B2, B8	20	
12	Murrell Green Business Park	Hook	2.5	B1, B2	20	
13	Martin Lines	Fleet	5.7	B1	20	
14	Land adjoining Redfields Industrial Estate	Fleet	3.0	B1	19	
15	Redfields Industrial Estate	Fleet	2.7	B1, B2	18	
16	Grove Farm	Crookham	1.2	B1(c), B8	18	
17	Eversley Haulage Yard	Hartfordbridge	2.4	B2, B8	18	
18	Fleet Business Park	Fleet	2.4	B1, B2, B8	18	
19	Clark's Farm	Yateley	14.7	B1, B2, B8	17	Lower Quality
20	Former Schotts Nightclub	Fleet	0.6	B1	15	
21	QE2 Barracks	Church Crookham	2.6	B1	15	
22	Land off Sandhurst Road	Yateley	2.5	B1, B8	14	
23	Brickyard Plantation	Fleet	2.4	B1	13	
24	Potter Industrial Park	Fleet	0.5	B1(c), B2	12	
	Total Site Area		186.3			

Source: Joint Employment Land Review for Surrey Heath, Hart and Rushmoor (November 2009), Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners. pp. 55

Status of Lower Quality Sites as assessed in the ELR

Site	Status (at July 2011)
Clark's Farm, Frogmore	Unimplemented Local Plan allocation for employment uses (Policy ALT DEV 17). There is no indication of the allocation being implemented.
Former Schott's Nightclub, Church Crookham	Vacant brownfield site, not allocated in Local Plan, but which received planning permission for Class B1 use (not implemented). Has a more recent outstanding permission for 60-bed care home.
QE2 Barracks Church Crookham	Unimplemented Local Plan allocation which includes an element of employment land (Policy DEV2). Permission was granted in June 2011, subject to a legal agreement. Core Strategy Preferred Approach proposes that the employment land element be used for additional housing.
Land off Sandhurst Road, Yateley	Unimplemented Local Plan allocation (Policy DEV 22). Outstanding permission for industrial and leisure development.
Brickyard Plantation, Fleet	Located within Fleet settlement boundary but not allocated in Local Plan. Existing permission for Class B1 (office) not yet fully implemented.