

9th May 2018

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Our Ref: CW/ph

Dear Sir

**Proposed Employment Land Allocation – Land Around Burnt Common Warehouse, London Road, Send (Policy A58)**

I write to update and further comment on my Statement which was submitted June 2017 relating to the above proposed allocation of land for employment use. The proposed allocation was for a minimum area of 7,000 sq. metres industrial/storage use to meet future Borough needs (Policy A58), which I supported.

The conclusions of my June 2017 Statement are highlighted below with additional comment as at present day highlighted in bold type.

- Current levels of industrial stock and land suitable for industrial development were both in extremely low supply and wholly insufficient to meet the future need for local businesses. Such need was highlighted in the Proposed Submission Local Plan (PSLP) and updated ELNA 2017 which informs emerging policy. I carried out an independent analysis of this projected need and concluded a need for additional employment land 6.42 times greater than that detailed in the 2017 ELNA. My analysis was undertaken in June 2017 and at present day the position is no different. **The figures I adopted relating to current supply and enquiry levels have not significantly changed.**
- As well as there being virtually no industrial land supply coming forward, the additional issue I highlighted in my Statement is that there are significant areas of land in industrial use in the Borough which have already been lost, or are allocated for alternative use and therefore will be lost in the next few years. There is a concentration of sites along Walnut Tree Close in Guildford particularly which are listed in Section 6.0 of my June 2017 Statement. **These proposals continue to gain momentum. To illustrate the point it has come to my attention that the current occupiers in the Riverside Business Centre on Walnut Tree Close were placed on notice as from April 2018 by their landlord of an intention to pursue a planning application to redevelop the industrial estate for residential use and the occupiers have therefore made contact with local agents (including my office in Guildford) to start the process of seeking alternative premises. The Riverside Business Centre currently houses eight tenants occupying 4,442 sq. m. in units from 339.9 to 1,424 sq. m. The problem here is the absence of available properties and land capable of development within Guildford Borough and so unless the “market” can accommodate such a need there are real prospects that such occupiers will have to relocate outside the Borough or cease operations altogether.**
- **With emerging policy in the town area/Walnut Tree Close it is probable, in my view, that further sites will be reassigned in terms of use over the lifetime of the new plan leading to increasing migration of industrial/warehouse use away from town locations. This will be an inevitable consequence of progress so the town area is remodelled.**

- In my June 2017 Statement I examined the relative strength and weaknesses of the proposed Burnt Common allocation as against the other significant Employment land allocations in the PSLP and formed the conclusion that the only site capable of immediate release to occupiers would be the subject Burnt Common land. I **highlight below my findings regarding the other significant allocations in the PLSP as follows:-**

***A24 – Slyfield Area Regeneration Project*** - the relocated Sewage Treatment Works, GBC Depot and Waste Management Facility for SCC will occupy virtually all of the land (other than the land which is to be developed for residential and ancillary uses). The current development proposal illustrates a very limited area for “new industrial/retail units”. The precise areas at this time are not clear and will be likely to change over time in any event. We note Policy A24 states 6,500 sq. metres for B1/B8 use but we believe this could change as the SARP gathers momentum. Latest information we can obtain from Guildford Borough Council is that at the present time no land is currently available to the market in general and the latest estimate for the likely timing for the release of land to the market is unlikely to be until mid term in the Plan i.e. from 2024/2025.

***A35 – Wisley*** - this residential led mixed use site includes an allocation of 2,500 sq. metres of industrial employment floor space (B2/B8). However, like the SARP the development proposal are at a very early stage and will be driven by the primary residential use. Consequently, we do not consider there are any realistic prospects for employment land to come forward at least until circa 2024/2025 onwards.

***A25 – Gosden Hill Farm, Merrow Lane*** – we note this residential led potential development includes an employment space allocation of up to 10,000 sq m. However the specified use is B1a (office) and B1b (high tech/research and development). There is therefore no allocation for the industrial/warehouse sector (B1c, B2 and B8 uses).

One further strategic Employment site in the local area is the Send Business Centre, Tannery Lane, Send which currently includes a number of industrial/warehouse uses but I note the PSLP allocates the site for B1a (office) and B1b (high tech/research and development) uses.

Consequently, of the significant employment land allocations in the PSLP only the Burnt Common land will hold the potential of immediate availability to satisfy a need for industrial/warehouse uses within use classes B1c, B2 and B8 which I see as becoming increasingly pressing. The owners of the site (Newship Group) are experienced property developers, particularly in relation to industrial development and the process to develop the land could commence immediately for early delivery.

- If the Burnt Common land is to be developed I consider there will be minimal impact on the local environment given that the site is adjacent to the A3 dual carriageway. At the same time the site is likely to meet the approval of occupiers since there would not be the traffic congestion pinch points which exist at most of the other industrial estates in the Borough and convenient access to the road network. Such a location in my experience will meet the approval of industrial B1c, B2 and B8 Logistics occupiers.

In conclusion, I continue to support the inclusion of Policy A58 in the PSLP. The allocation offers the potential to satisfy a pressing need for new employment floor space in the Borough and an industrial/warehouse scheme at this location would, in my view, be appropriate with its proximity to the A3 dual carriageway and importantly is capable of immediate development.

Yours faithfully



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